

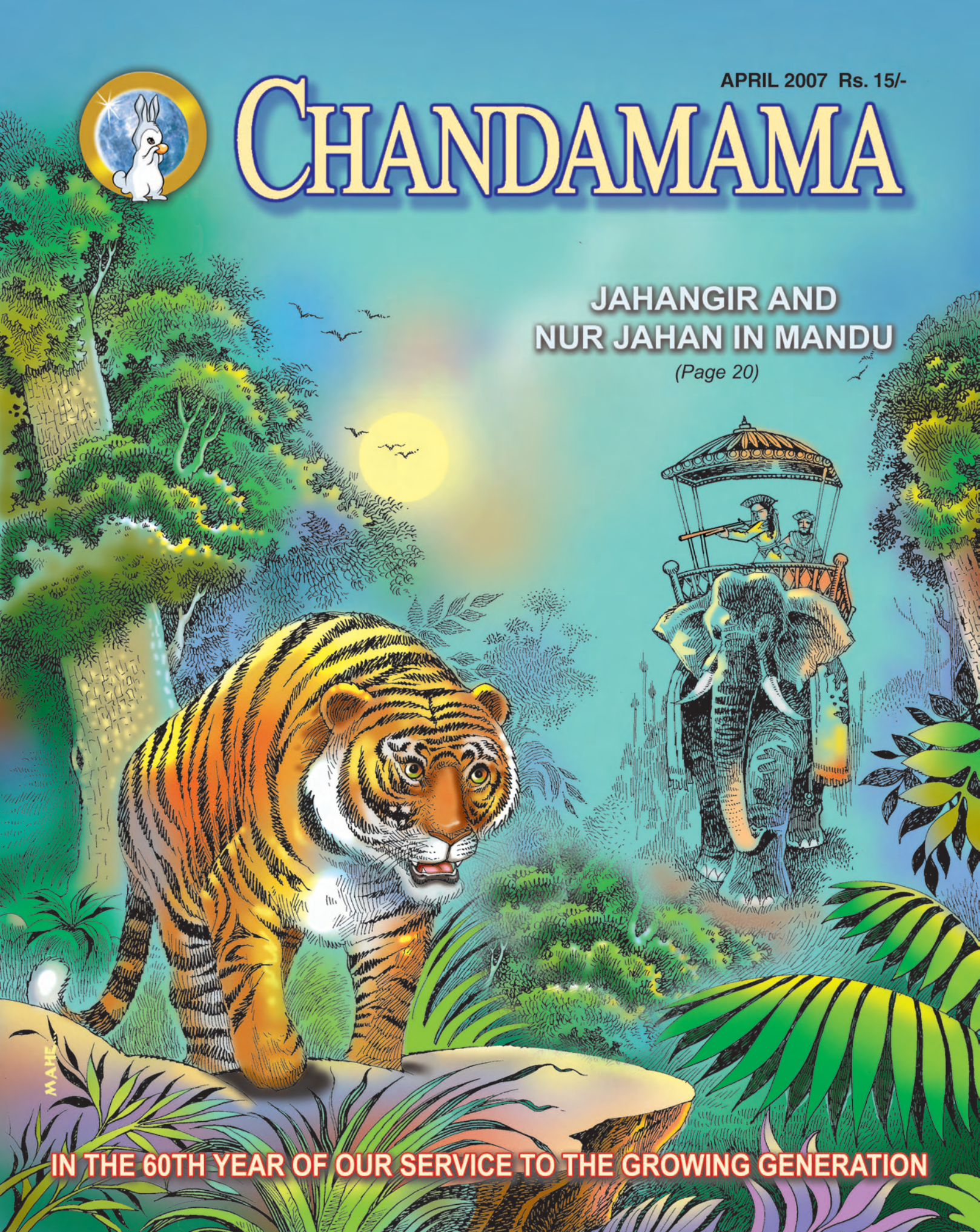
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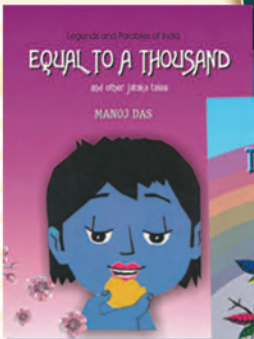
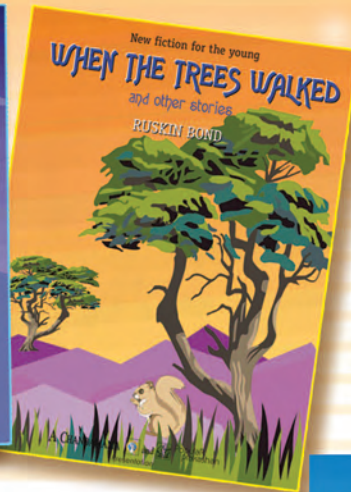
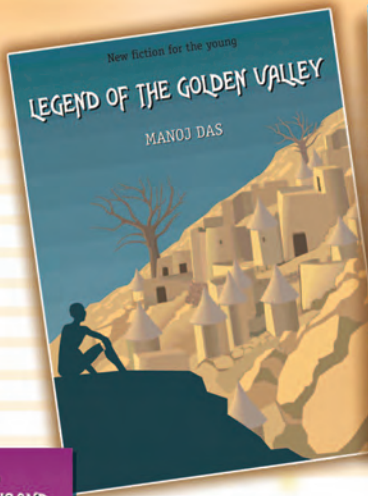
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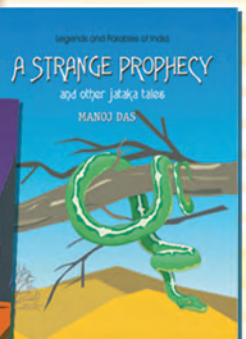
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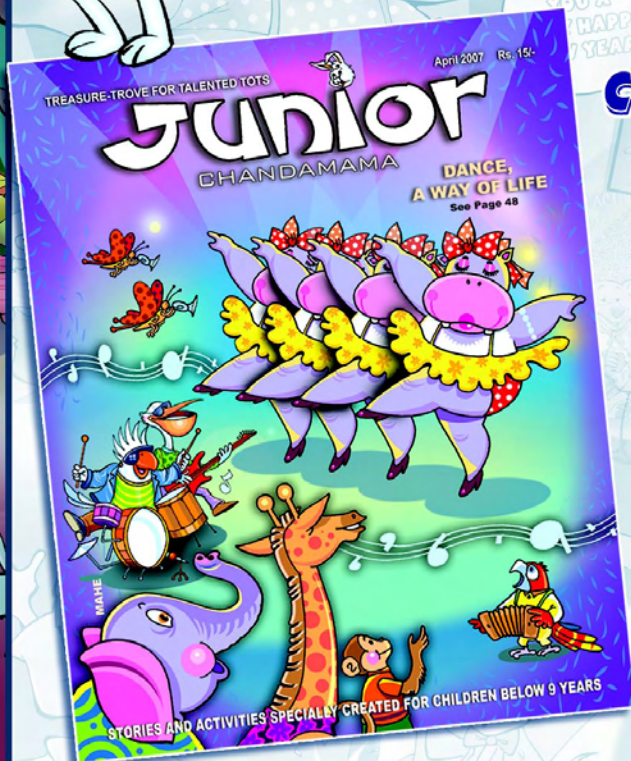
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PRESCRIPTION FOR A BRIGHTER LIFE

If you are looking for a fearless society, a world at peace, humanity enjoying a harmonious life, here is a prescription: education with values, religion transformed to spirituality, coupled with courage to invent and discover, courage to share knowledge, and courage to combat problems.

This prescription for a brighter future for the citizens has come from the President of India, Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam, when he addressed students recently. We are aware of the fact that the primitive man's quest for knowledge began with the struggle for survival. If man has reached the present stage, it was due to the courage of some people to think of innovations initially and later to embark upon exploring into the unknown. There cannot be a limit to our knowledge.

The quest may initially be aimed at the betterment of oneself, but ultimately the objective will expand for the improvement of humanity. Two steps towards this will be, eradication of poverty and spread of literacy. The latter is the means to realise the end.

Education, according to Dr.Abdul Kalam, will be more meaningful only when it is supplemented with certain values. While education imparts knowledge, imbibing of values paves the foundation for character building, while courage will take an individual forward to think of humanity at large.

Chandamama hopes that the future citizens of India will take the President's message with all sincerity and not only adopt it in one's personal life, but for the sake of humanity and make the world a peaceful, beautiful place to live in.

Modesty, when she goes, is gone for ever. - **Landon**

A completely planned economy ensures that when
no bacon is delivered, no eggs are
delivered at the same time.

- **Leo Frain**

Extremists think "communication" means agreeing with them. - **Leo Rosten**

Hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue. The
head is always the dupe of the heart.

- **La Rochie Foucauld**

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Reader Khushbu of Patna says in a mail:
The story 'Mystery of the tinkling anklets' in your March issue is very interesting. It has a moral about true friendship.

Anant Gupta (13) writes from NOIDA:
As a member of the *Chandamama* family, I congratulate you on the success of the magazine. I request you to keep your reputation high and higher. I am greatly impressed by the way you impart education through your Quiz.

Manisha (12) of Kharagpur has this to say:
I heartily congratulate *Chandamama* on completing the fascinating journey of 60 years. I really like Science Fair, Adventure and Exploration, and Mythology. *Chandamama* has triggered my creative sense, due to which I can now write my own poems and stories. My brother and I are great fans of *Chandamama*. The magazine is really doing a great job of inspiring creativity in children. Three cheers to *Chandamama*!

Thank you, Manisha, for sending the piece "April Born-Gugleimo Marconi". As you know, we have a Science Correspondent and he has been presenting this biography series for nearly two years. We look forward to your contribution to Kaleidoscope.
- Editor

This came from reader Sruti Bheri:
I am 12 years old and I live in the U.K. I love reading *Chandamama* and it gives me great pleasure. I am sending two poems. Please publish them if you like them.

MAIL BAG

Reader Alex D'Souza of Udupi writes:
I am only 55 years old. I work 16 hours a day, but I find time to read *Chandamama* without fail. All the pages are interesting; thoroughly blended in terms of topic, illustrations and colour; suitable for all age groups. Timely changes are welcome.

Priyanka Maisnam (14) of Imphal writes:
I was glad to see my poem in the January issue. It was the first poem I wrote and when I saw it published, my heart was filled with happiness.

This came from G.Shanmughapriya, Chennai:
In the story "Heaven or Hell", the sentence "if people put their mind and actions in the right way, anything could be possible" gives self-confidence to the younger generation. Each and every story in *Chandamama* is a diamond. It prompts us to read it again and again.

Suma S. Mashal, Bangalore, has this to say:
I like jokes, folk tales, and the Fearless Four. I like to read all the stories.





NEW TALES
OF KING
VIKRAM AND
THE VETALA

THE SEEKER OF PRAISE

The cremation ground presented an eerie spectacle on that dark night. The moon was hidden behind the clouds, and it was drizzling intermittently. The pitch darkness was relieved only by occasional flashes of lightning that lit up the sombre scene, causing an eerie dance of jerky shadows in the cremation ground.

Occasionally, a jackal's spine-chilling howl or the blood-curdling laughter of some invisible evil spirit cut into the silence that hung like a shroud over the area. Altogether, it was a scene that would strike terror into the bravest heart. But nothing could daunt the intrepid King Vikram. Once again, he made his way to the gnarled tree from which the ancient corpse was hanging. Bones crunched under his feet, and a screeching ghost rose from the dust in shuddering frenzy as he marched determinedly ahead.

Oblivious to everything but the mission at hand, he brought the hanging corpse down by cutting the rope with his sword. Slinging it astride his shoulder, he had just begun his return journey when the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King! People sometimes perform dangerous feats for the sake of acquiring some miraculous powers. But later, they simply throw away those powers which they had obtained with so much difficulty! I hope this does not happen in your case. To illustrate, let me tell you the story of Vitanga of Veerpuri."

The tale the vampire narrated was as follows.

The King of Vilopadesa was facing a serious problem. Hordes of demons had descended on his kingdom and were wreaking havoc, devouring dozens of his subjects each day. He had no idea how he could put an end to the demons' menace.

One day, a sage named Nityananda happened to



visit his court. The king told him about the problem threatening his kingdom, and begged him to find a solution.

The sage pulled out a magic mirror which he had obtained by yogic powers. One could use it to summon anyone from any of the three worlds at will. Through the mirror, the sage contacted Mahabala, the king of the demons, and apprised him of the problems his subjects were causing in Vilopadesa.

But Mahabala humbly answered, “O sage, human flesh is the natural food for my subjects; so how can I ask them to desist from eating human beings? You may yourself find a solution to this problem by applying your infinite wisdom.”

After a moment’s thought, the sage declared, “In that case, issue a decree that from now on, the demons may kill and eat only sinners. They must leave righteous people alone. If any demon violates this rule, he would be struck down with a terrible stomach-ache. This stomach-ache can be cured by a herbal medicine, but it would work only if a courageous human being pours it into the demon’s mouth.”

Mahabala agreed to this.

After this, the number of people being killed by the demons came down drastically. The news of the king’s deal with the demon-king spread all over the kingdom. When the people realised that the demons would spare the righteous, they abandoned their sinful ways and became exemplary citizens.

Veerpuri was a village of Vilopadesa. Vitanga was the only son of the rich landlord of Veerpuri. Excessive parental pampering had turned him into a vain, selfish lad. As he was used to hearing only praise from his family members for whatever he did, he wanted that everyone he met should praise him. When his playmates refused to do so, he quarrelled with them. As a result, he was soon isolated by everyone and found himself without friends.

He approached his grandfather and complained to him about the behaviour of the other boys. The latter reasoned with him, “The only way to earn praise is by behaving well with others. You cannot force people to praise you.”

But Vitanga retorted stubbornly, “I shall do exactly as I please. There is no question of changing my behaviour to suit others. Regardless of that, everyone must praise me!”

On hearing this childish and immature viewpoint, the grandfather realised that the boy needed education. He arranged to send him to Pandit Shardaprasad, the most eminent scholar of Veerpuri, for training.

Vitanga turned out to be an exceptionally bright student. Eager to earn the guru’s praise, he worked hard. Within a year, he had outdone all the others and was easily the best student in the school. But again, the same problem cropped up. He wanted to be praised by all and sundry, and would pick a fight with anyone who declined to flatter him. His fellow-pupils complained to the guru about his high-handed behaviour. Pandit Shardaprasad called him and asked him for an explanation.

But Vitanga grumbled, “I’m your best student and you ought to praise me. Instead, you take sides with the other boys and ask me for explanations! This is strange!”

Pandit Shardaprasad tried to din some sense into his pupil’s head. “Granted, you’re more intelligent than the

others. But your schoolmates don't like you. Your intelligence is of no use to you or anyone else. If you wish to earn the praise of others, you must do something that would benefit them." But Vitanga did not appreciate this advice. He made no attempt to change his ways.

A few years went by.

One day, the guru asked his pupils to go to the neighbouring forest to collect some herbs. All the boys, with the exception of Vitanga, set out on the mission.

A ferocious demon entered the forest. He was in serious trouble. As a consequence of eating a good man a few days ago, he was having chronic stomach-ache. Now, he was on the lookout for a man fearless enough to pour the medicine into his mouth, so that he could be cured.

With this intention, he approached the group of students and requested them to help him. But so terrifying was his appearance that at the mere sight of him, the entire group collapsed in a dead faint!

When his pupils did not return long past the stipulated time, Pandit Shardaprasad sent Vitanga into the forest to investigate. Vitanga found the demon sitting despondently beside the unconscious students. On seeing him, the demon made the same request to him. Vitanga unhesitatingly asked him, "If I help you, what will you give me in return?"

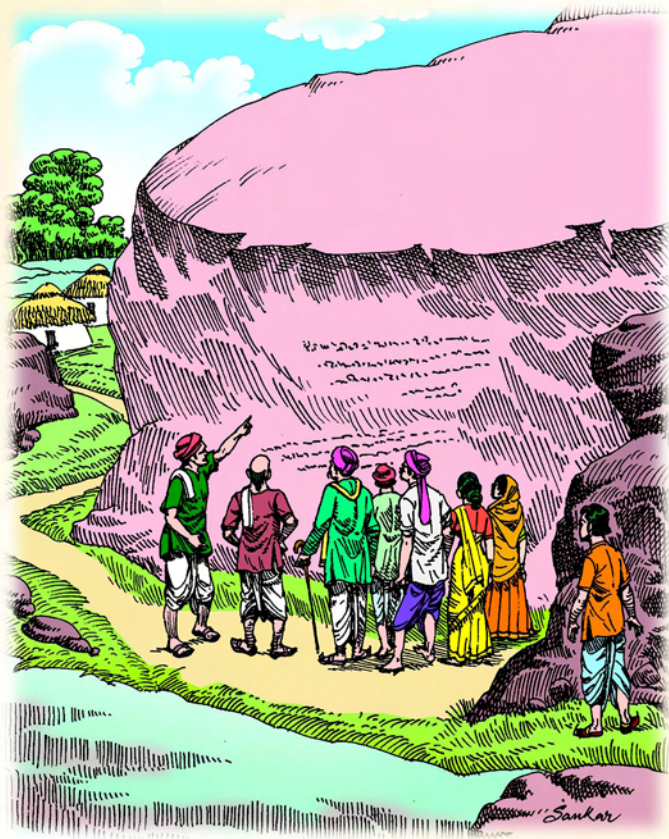
"Whatever you ask for!" answered the demon promptly.

"My desire is this – I should hear only praise from everyone, irrespective of what I do. Can you grant this?" Vitanga asked.

"Sure, why not? I know a magic mantra called *Stuteendra*, which has the effect you wish for. Cure me of my stomach-ache, and I shall teach it to you," said the demon.

Vitanga got the medicine ready from the forest herbs. Then, the demon lifted him up to his mouth. Vitanga fearlessly got in and poured the medicine into his mouth. The demon was instantly cured.

Delighted, he set Vitanga down, thanked him, and taught him the mantra. "All you have to do is to recite it every morning. Everyone you meet that day will praise



you, irrespective of whether you do good or bad. You'll soon earn a name for yourself." He then went away.

When Vitanga revived his unconscious fellow-pupils and told them of his encounter with the demon, they praised his courage sky-high. Back in the gurukul, it was the same story. Whoever heard the story just couldn't stop praising him. Vitanga basked in the acclaim. Soon, the guru declared that he had completed his education.

Back home, Vitanga continued to recite *Stuteendra* and found that it paid rich dividends! The village administrator and other village elders called on him and told him that they would like to become his followers.

Soon, Vitanga became the undisputed leader of the village. Thanks to the mantra, every action of his won him effusive praise; all the good things that happened in Veerpuri were attributed to him. Even when he did something wrong, no one questioned him. Gradually, he slid into misdemeanour. Under his influence, the village elders also took to vices and started failing in their duties. Veerpuri became a hotbed of nefarious activities.

The degeneration of Veerpuri did not escape the

king's eyes. He made enquiries and found out that it was Vitanga who was at the bottom of it all. Not knowing how to tackle this peculiar problem, he sought the advice of sage Nityananda.

The sage pondered the matter and finally said, "Announce that I'm going to meet Mahabala and ask him to send his demons to devour all wrong-doers."

"But, O sage," protested the king, "the problem lies not with others, but with Vitanga! It is he who sins and incites others to sin! What can be done with him?"

"Don't worry! Issue an edict praising Vitanga and get it carved on stone. Along with that, make a proclamation about the fate that awaits sinners and wrongdoers. That will solve your problem," said the sage confidently.

The king followed the advice. Within a year, a perceptible change came over Vitanga. He stopped using the *Stuteendra* mantra and took to honest work for a living. Along with him, the entire population of Veerpuri, too, underwent a change of heart and became law-abiding. The king heaved a sigh of relief.

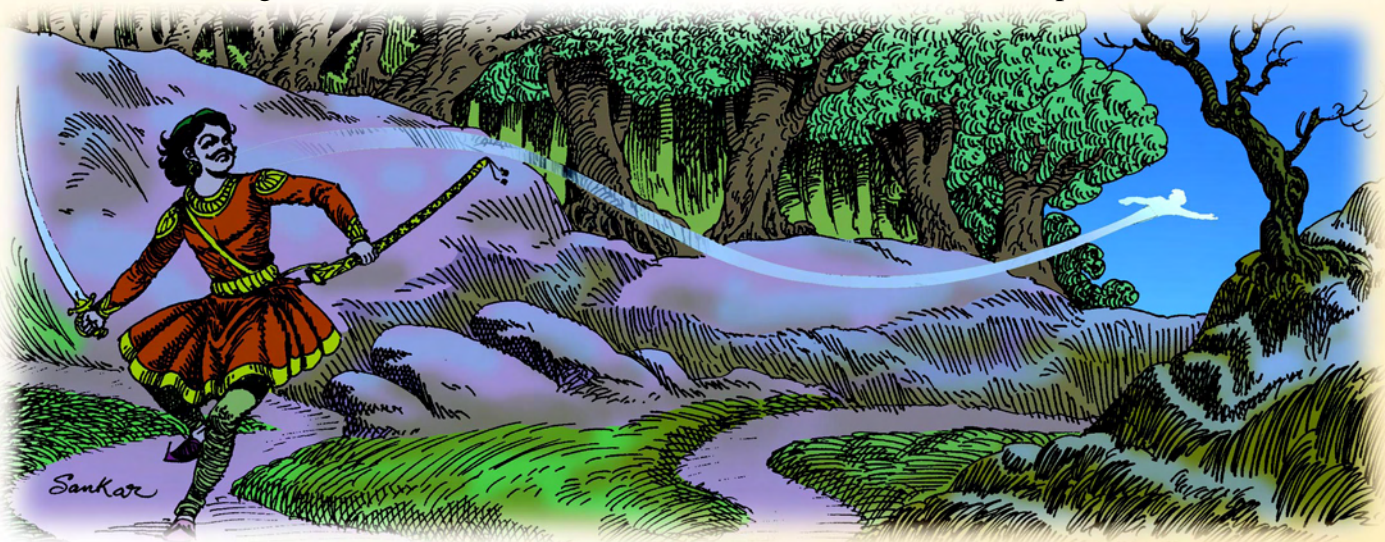
Concluding the story at this point, the vampire demanded, "O King! What caused the miraculous

transformation in Vitanga the praise-seeker? Was it a fear of death, or something else? If you know the answer to my question, speak out – otherwise, your head shall shatter into smithereens!"

Calmly, King Vikram replied, "It's true that the fear of death is the greatest of all man's fears. But for some people, the desire for praise is an even greater motivator than the fear of death. Vitanga was one such person, who valued public acclaim above all else.

"He retained this nature right up to the end. As a measure of self-preservation, he gave up criminal activities (because the demons were authorised to eat sinners). But if he gave up using the *Stuteendra* mantra, it was because he derived greater pleasure from the adulatory message the king put up on stone for posterity, than from the artificial praise he obtained by using the mantra. Thus, it is clear that there was no change in his basic nature."

On hearing this, the vampire went off into peal after peal of thunderous laughter. The next moment he, along with the corpse, moved off the king's shoulder with a jerk and flew back to the tree. King Vikram gave a little sigh as he gazed upon the scene. Then, he squared his shoulders and retraced his steps towards the ancient tree.



DID YOU KNOW?

The phrase *second string*, meaning 'replacement or back-up', comes to us from the Middle Ages. In medieval times, an archer would always have a spare string on hand, in case the one on his bow broke.

A REMINDER OF OUR DEBT TO NATURE

VISHU is celebrated all over Kerala or wherever Keralites live. It marks the new year from the 1st day of the Malayalam month of Medam, which invariably comes off on April 14. The harvest would have taken place; the field would have been ploughed afresh, and kept ready for sowing. The farmer looks skywards for rain clouds. The festival reminds man of his debt to Mother Nature, that his prosperity depends on Nature's bounties.

This is evidenced in the *Vishukkani* (display) arranged by the elders at home the previous night. A large bell-metal vessel is placed between two traditional lamps. First, rice is spread in the vessel; over the rice are kept plantain leaf bowls filled with nine different cereals (*navadhanya*). A new unwashed piece of cloth, folded like a fan, is fixed among the bowls. A part of the fan will have a gold ornament, silver coins, a bell metal mirror and a bunch of the seasonal yellow flowers of the cassia. Inside the vessel are also kept a few fresh fruits and vegetables—one of each kind—of the season. Pictures of Krishna, Lakshmi and Saraswati may also find a place in this 'tableau'.



Early morning, the oldest member wakes up the others one by one and leads them to the Kani, prompting them to open their eyes and look into the mirror in the centre first to see his or her own face. This is described as the

auspicious *kani-kanuka* (watching the *Vishukkani*). The decorated ensemble of the bounties of Nature, shining by the light from the oil lamps, is a feast for the eyes. The younger members now eagerly wait for the gift of a coin, called *Vishukkaineettam*, from the eldest member. They all then gather in the courtyard to burst crackers. A sumptuous feast at noon is an essential part of the festival.

Mid-April New Year: The Hindu New Year commencing on Meda Sankranti is also celebrated in Assam and West Bengal. In Assam, it is called *Goru Bihu* and *Rongali Bihu*. On the eve of Bihu, the cattle are given a ceremonial bath and decorated with turmeric and treated to *gur* (jaggery) and brinjal. The next day, *Rongali Bihu* is celebrated, when girls present scarves woven by them to young men of their choice. In turn, they make a gift of *kopow* (dove) orchids. Both girls and boys then engage themselves in mirthful dancing. In Bengal, the day is called *Naba Barsha*. People go for an early morning dip in a river or tank and take out processions singing songs. The new year is also welcomed by group dancing.



From the
pen of
RUSKIN BOND

TEMPORARY SHELTER

Mumtaz's hut was one of the few homes left standing. Light and flimsy and made of wooden planks and a thatched roof, it could have been blown away by a strong wind. But it withstood the earthquake. While bricks and plaster had come crashing down, the light wooden structure had shaken and shivered and swayed with the movements of the earth, but it had remained upright.

Dolly was soon at home in the hut, playing on the smooth earthen floor with the cook's children. Mukesh still hung on to Grandfather, while Grandmother, hands on hips, surveyed the wreckage of the house.

"I hope Rakesh is all right," said Grandfather. "If you can keep an eye on Mukesh, I'll go and look for him."

"Yes, do. I'm worried about him," said Grandmother. "And we may get another earthquake!"

"Will you be all right here?"

"Well, there's nothing left to fall down. Mumtaz says we must sleep in his house tonight. It seems to be the safest place."

"You and the children can sleep there. I'll sleep out in the open. It's warm enough—and I don't think it will rain."

While Grandfather was gone, looking for Rakesh, Grandmother and Mumtaz searched among the ruins of the house for things that could still be used. Unfortunately most of their belongings were buried deep beneath the rubble, and there was hardly anything worth retrieving—just a battered pram, a boxful of clothes, several tins of sardines, some cans of fruit juice that had rolled across the grass, and Grandfather's typewriter, which hadn't been working anyway. They had no idea that Pickle was in the ruined building, buried at the bottom of everything; they thought he was somewhere in the neighbourhood, dashing about as usual, looking for the cause of all the trouble.

"Find my dolls!" demanded Dolly. "And the doll's house." But the doll's house no longer existed.

"No more toys," said Mukesh with satisfaction, feeling very grown-up about everything. "We're poor now."

"Has the bank fallen down too?" asked Dolly.

"Must have," said Mukesh sagely.

In spite of Grandfather's prediction of clear weather, it began to rain and they all had to take shelter in Mumtaz's little hut. The small room was very crowded, but Mumtaz, though one did not notice, had a big heart.

The waters of the upturned lake drained away



almost as rapidly as they had flooded the surrounding area. Rakesh peered through the branches of the tree in the general direction of his school. He wanted to know the time. Usually the clock-tower above the school building was visible for miles around, but now there was no sign of it. It had, in fact, disappeared when the rest of the building collapsed. Even now frantic efforts were being made to extricate the Headmaster from the rubble around his desk where he had been trapped by a falling beam. The classrooms were a shambles and a fire had broken out in the kitchen and was spreading to other parts of the building. It would be many months before the school would start functioning again.

After some time, Rakesh climbed down from the tree. He looked around for his bicycle, but couldn't see it anywhere. A lot of other things had been washed up at the base of the tree, including a dead cat, several drowned chickens, fish that had been left flopping around when the water receded, and a cinema hoarding. The face of a famous Bombay film-star stared up from the mud.

In the distance he saw a great cloud of dust. He did not know it then, but the dust came from hundreds of fallen or damaged buildings. Rakesh, of course, knew that there had been an earthquake, a tremendous one, and that it must have been felt over a large area. What could have happened to his grandparents and his brother and sister? He began running for home, taking the road through the town.

He wasn't sure it was the same town he was running through, because many of the familiar landmarks had gone. The town's biggest and most expensive hotel, the Grand Eastern, had tumbled down. Many of its guests had been killed. An ambulance stood in the grounds, and across the road a fire-engine was trying to put out several fires which had broken out. Almost automatically Rakesh began to help the rescue-workers who were clearing the rubble. There wasn't much he could do apart from shifting bricks and broken furniture. Then he realized that his own home might be in a similar condition,



and he paused, staring horrified at the wreckage of the once posh hotel. He felt a touch on his shoulder. Grandfather was standing beside him.

"Are you all right, my boy?"

Rakesh nodded, although he looked rather bewildered. "And everyone at home?" he asked.

"They're all right." Grandfather did not mention the house. "Come along, there's nothing you can do here. What happened to the bicycle?"

"It was swept away. All the water came out of the lake. I had to climb a tree!"

They walked home in silence. But all around them there was noise and confusion.

Rakesh hadn't expected to find their house in total ruin. He looked around in shock and dismay.

"Everything's gone!" he said at last. "What luck—what terrible luck..."

"No," said Grandfather. "We're the lucky ones! We're alive, aren't we?"

(To continue...)



MYSORE ROCKET

Diwali (Deepavali) coming off in October-November is the jolly time for bursting crackers. One of the popular items in the kit is the rocket. We hear that word when India's own ISRO or the NASA in the USA sends satellites into space with the help of rockets. But rockets were used as a weapon, too, centuries ago. Did you know that India is a pioneer in rocketry and it was Tipu Sultan of Mysore who developed rocketry for warfare in the last decades of the 18th century? The Mysore army had a 'rocket corps', comprising 5,000 men who had been imparted technical knowledge how to adjust the elevation of rockets on the basis of their size and distance of the target. It is said, the average 'Mysore rocket' had a range of 2.4km. The biggest sky-rocket in England around that time had a range of only about 1 km. The Britishers were clever enough to collect the rockets fired against them in the Mysore wars and put them to research in England and effect improvements in their own rockets.



LARGEST GATHERING OF WOMEN

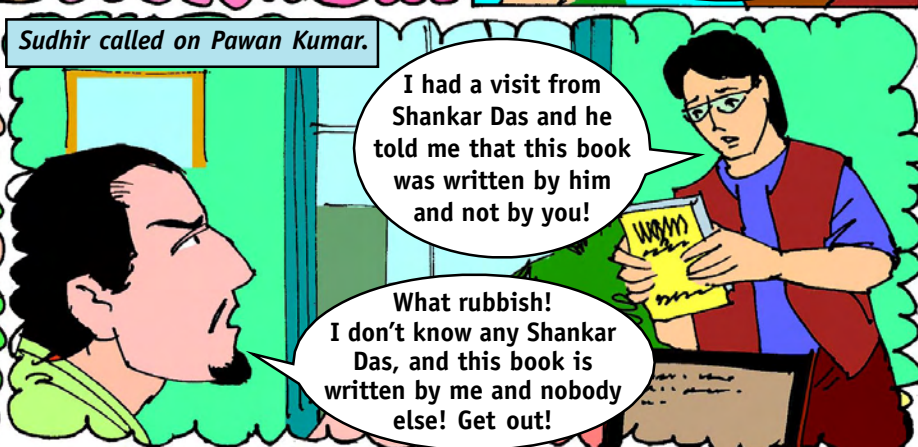
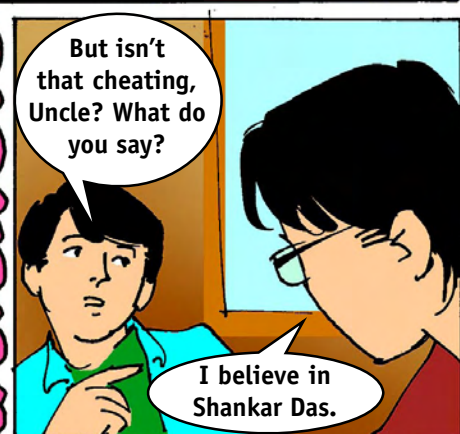
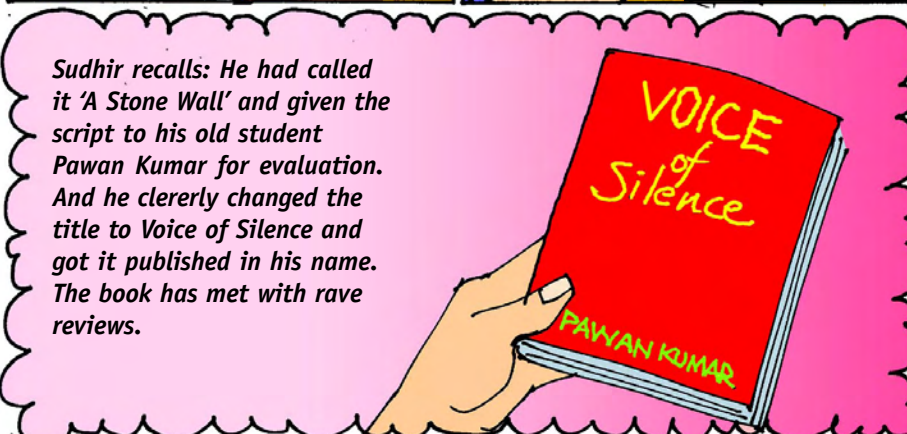
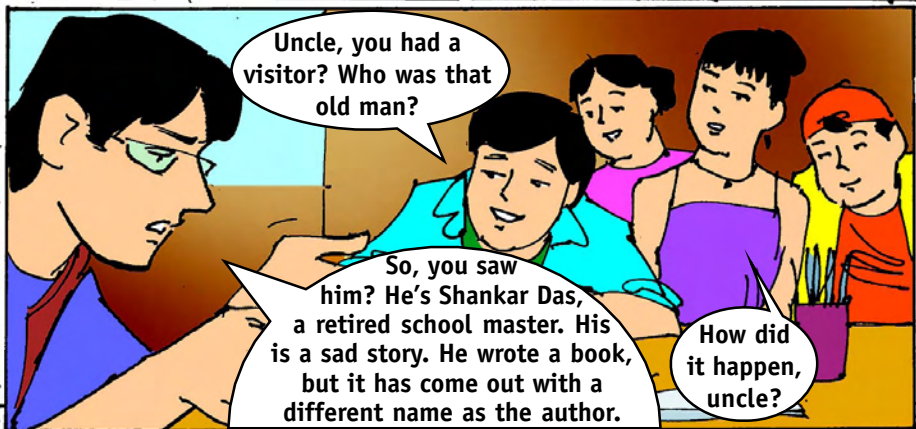
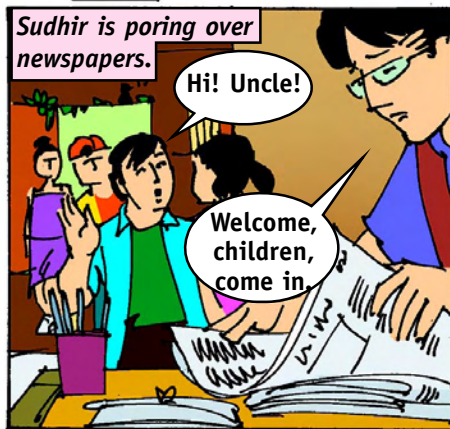
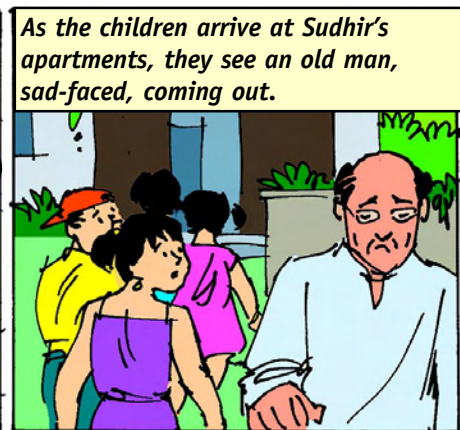
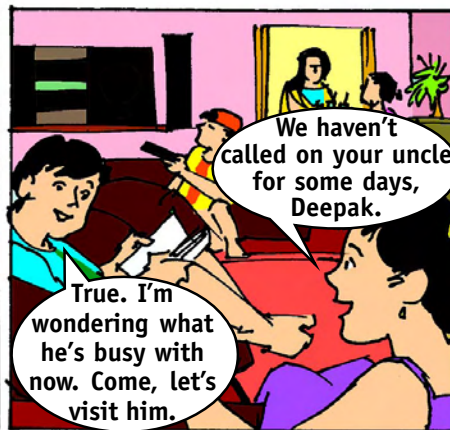
At Attukal in Trivandrum, there is a temple dedicated to Bhagavathi, who is believed to be the divine form of Kannagi, who has a temple to herself in Kodungallur in Kerala. The legend says that Kannagi was on her way to Kodungallur (Cranganore) after destroying the ancient city of Madurai to avenge the injustice meted out to her husband, Kovilan—a story immortalised in the Tamil epic

Silappadikaram. When she reached Attukal, the women offered her hospitality. To commemorate the event, women of not only

Attukal but from all over India and elsewhere gather on a certain day in March and perform Ponkala.

They line up along the roads leading to the Bhagavathi temple, and cook rice on makeshift hearths which are lit with fire brought from the temple. On a rough estimate, some 2,500,000 women devotees are reported to have attended this year's Attukal Ponkala on March 3. *The Guinness Book of World Records* may recognise it as the biggest religious congregation of women.







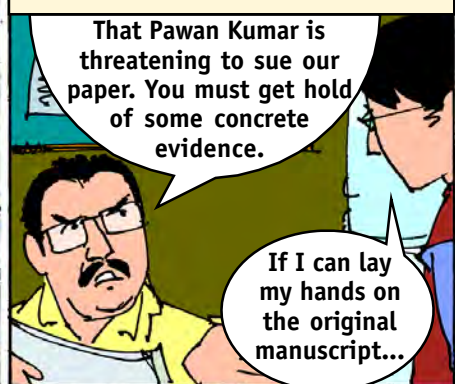
Sudhir visits the school where Shankar Das was teacher.



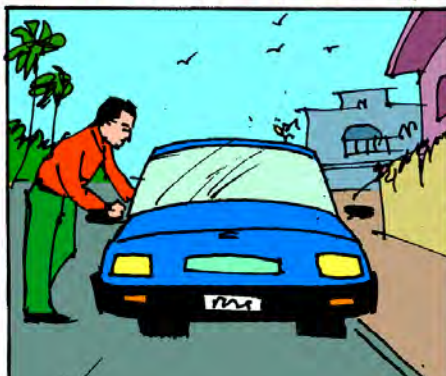
Next morning...



Sudhir is summoned by his Editor.



The children meet Sudhir.



Pawan Kumar parks his car.

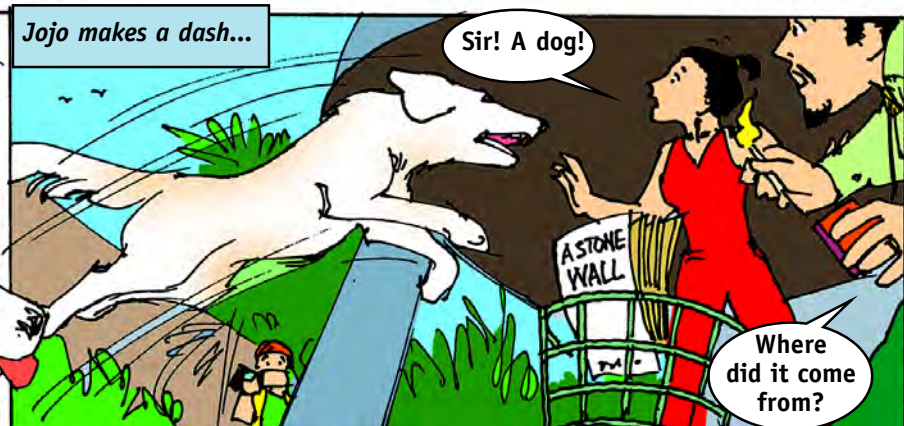
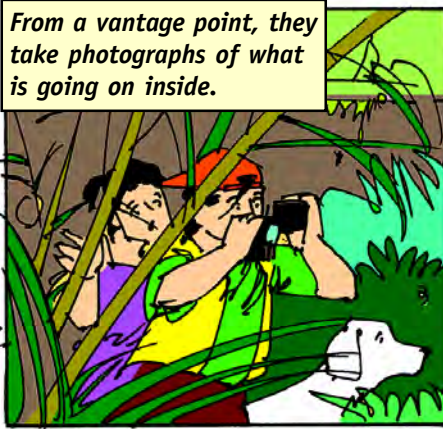


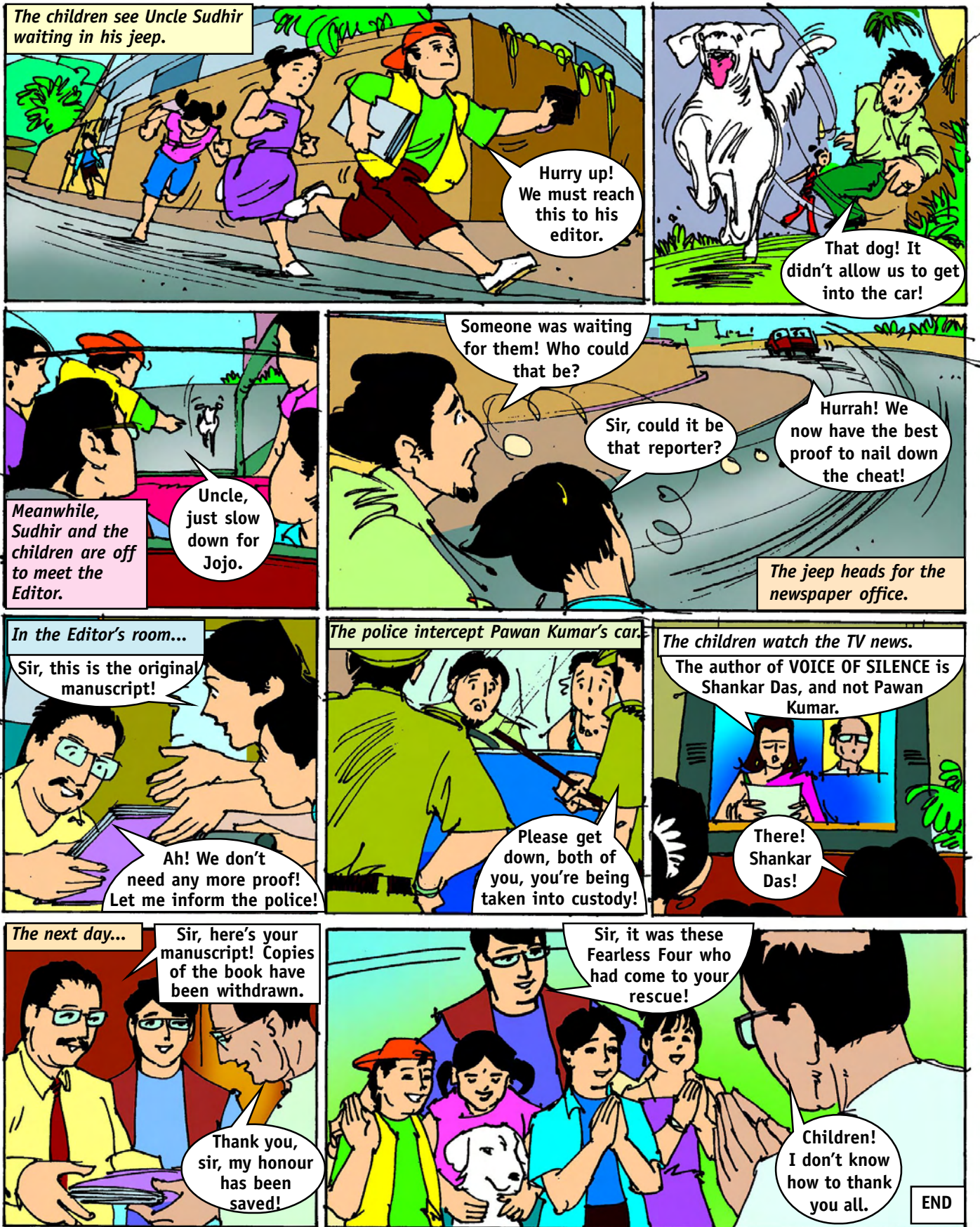
The children rush to the Secretary's residence.

The children reach the Secretary's house soon after he enters.



From a vantage point, they take photographs of what is going on inside.





LAKSHMI'S GRACE

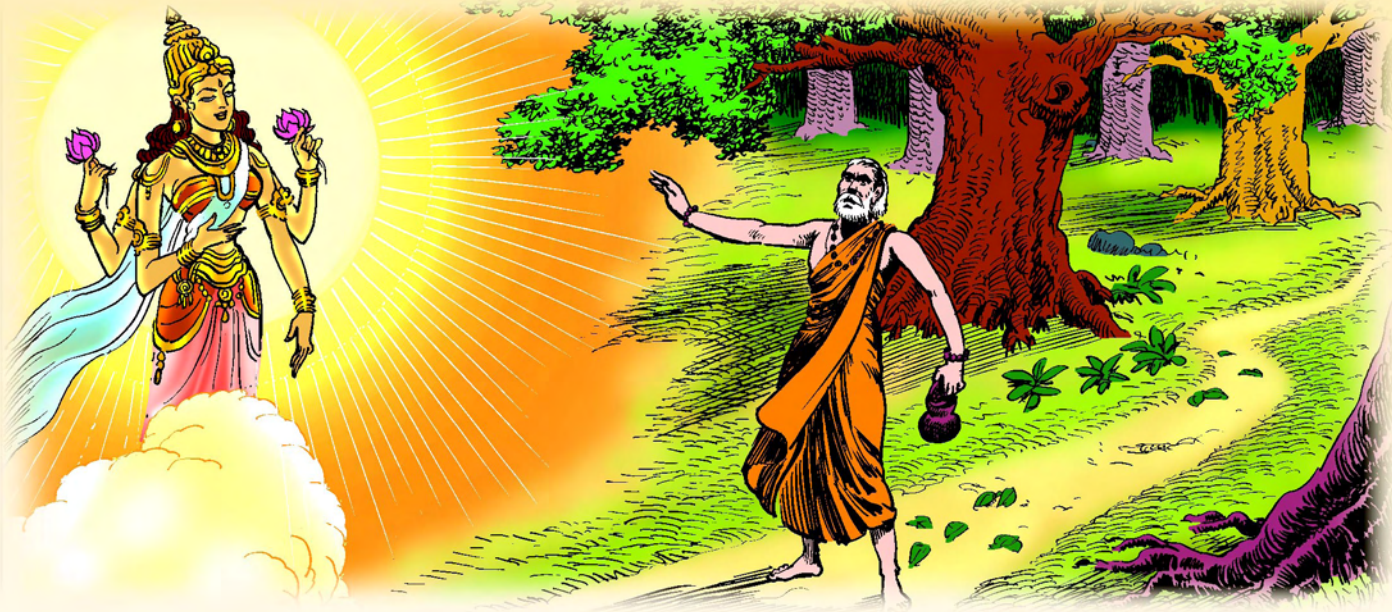
There once lived a nobleman who had an intense desire for a vision of Goddess Lakshmi. To realise his wish, he started worshipping Her by chanting each of Her thousand names one hundred times in the prescribed manner. Although he continued his worship for long, Goddess Lakshmi did not appear before him.

Eventually, he lost all hope of ever getting a vision of the goddess. Disappointed and desperate, he decided to renounce the world. After giving away all his wealth, he clad himself in simple clothes, like those worn by ascetics, and set out for the forest to perform a rigorous penance.

On the way, he was stunned when he saw a radiant vision. It was Goddess Lakshmi! She said, "I have revealed myself to you to fulfil your wish."

The ascetic was piqued. He said, "You may go away, as I have renounced the world and taken to *sanyas*. When I was craving for your vision, you did not appear. What's the use of revealing yourself now?"

"Worshipping with a motive is like begging for favours. I do not fulfil the wishes of such people. But now, having renounced the world, you no longer have any desires. So, I decided to reveal myself to you," explained the goddess.



LIMCA recognition for *Chandamama*

"The longest-running children's magazine" is how the 2007 edition of LIMCA Book of Records describes the popular *Chandamama* which is soon to complete 60 years in June this year. The entry in India's own Book of Records mentions of the 13 languages in which the magazine appears month after month. The Santhali edition *Chandomamo* is the first children's magazine in a tribal language. LIMCA also recognises the fact that the editor, B. Viswanatha Reddi, has also been the magazine's publisher for 40 years without a break.



A PAGE FROM INDIAN HISTORY

JAHANGIR AND

Emperor Jahangir and Queen Nur Jahan stood on the wide open terrace of Jahaz Mahal, an elegant two-storeyed palace. The year was 1617. They were visiting Mandu after a long time. Nur Jahan gazed admiringly at the two artificial lakes – Kapur Talao and Munja Talao - between which the ship-like palace had been built.

“I don’t wonder why you renamed the place ‘The City of Joy’. It is one of the most beautiful places I have ever visited,” said Nur Jahan.

“I knew you would like it,” said Jahangir with a smile, “I love the place too.”

“I’m glad you had the old palaces rebuilt and renovated,” remarked the queen.

“I never get tired of considering its infinite possibilities – the beautiful lakes, palaces, gates and other structures. And I particularly love the dense wood surrounding the fort,” said the emperor. “I’m longing to go out and hunt there.”

“It is said to be full of big game, isn’t it?” enquired Nur Jahan. “I’ve heard it is full of tigers.”

“Yes, that’s what the people here say,” agreed Jahangir. “Would you like to accompany me?”

“Of course, I do,” said Nur Jahan. “Where else would I get such a chance to shoot tigers?”

“I’m sure you mean it,” said Jahangir, “I know you are said to be a crack shot. But isn’t the Mandu forest too deep and dense for you? You’ll have to go on elephant back, you know. And let me tell you, it’s by no means easy to shoot from there.”

“I’m not afraid,” said Nur Jahan laughing, “I know I’m quite equal to the task.”

“Well, we’ll see when the time comes,” said Jahangir looking amused, “but there is something else you need to think about right now.”

“What is it?” asked the queen curiously.

“Have you forgotten that the festival of Shab-e-Barat is approaching fast? Have you decided how we should celebrate it?”

“Of course, I haven’t forgotten,” said Nur Jahan tossing her head, “you leave the celebrations to me. I’ve planned something the like of which no one would have seen here before.”

“Then, I’m satisfied,” said the emperor.

Mandu had really come to life once again during Jahangir’s reign. And Nur Jahan was true to her words. The celebration organised by her was indeed spectacular. Everyone spoke of it, and this is what Jahangir wrote in his *Memoirs*: “On the feast day of Shab-e-Barat, I held a meeting in one of the palaces of Nur Jahan which was situated in the midst of large tanks. I summoned the *amirs* and courtiers to the feast which had been prepared by the Begum. I ordered the attendants to supply the guests with whatever drinks they called for. All



NUR JAHAN IN MANDU



sorts of roast meat and fruits were ordered to be placed before everyone. It was indeed a wonderful assembly. They lighted lanterns and lamps all round the tanks and the buildings – the like of which has perhaps never been arranged in any place. The lanterns and lamps cast their reflections on the water and it appeared as if the whole surface of the tank was a plain of fire.”

The next excitement came when the queen persuaded Jahangir to take her to the thick woods of Mandu for hunting. “Very well, if you insist,” said Jahangir, “I hope you know that several tigers have recently been seen.”

“That’s why I want to go,” said Nur Jahan with twinkling eyes, “what’s the use of hunting if there are no animals to be seen?”

“I meant big game,” said Jahangir, “it’s not exactly the sort to be tackled by women!”

“Pooh! Who wants to shoot deer and rabbits and

birds?” said Nur Jahan scornfully. “Not me!”

“Very well. Are you planning to accompany me alone?”

“A few of my attendants might come if you permit them,” said Nur Jahan. “I’m not the only lady who can wield a gun.”

“Tell me, my Begum, do you really think you’ll be able to shoot a tiger?” asked Jahangir once again.

“I’m quite sure I can,” said Nur Jahan, “if you don’t mind giving me the chance.”

“Very well. You shall have the first chance,” said Jahangir laughing. He had no doubt that Nur Jahan would quake like a jelly if she actually saw a tiger and that he would have to do the actual shooting.

But his fear proved to be baseless. This time at least Nur Jahan had not boasted in vain! It was she and not Jahangir who shot not one but four tigers before evening, leaving everyone speechless with admiration. That night, as they returned to the palace, Jahangir called for a special celebration to mark the event. He scattered gold coins all over the queen, as was the royal tradition, and also presented her with some rare pieces of jewellery. This is what a proud Jahangir recorded in his journal that night: “On the 7th, as the huntsmen had marked down four tigers. I went out to hunt them with the ladies. When the tigers came in sight, Nur Jahan said that if I would permit her, she herself would kill the tigers with her gun. I said, ‘Let it be so’. Then she shot two tigers with one shot each and knocked over the two others with four shots. In the twinkling of an eye, she deprived these four tigers of life. Until now such shooting was never seen and that, too, from the top of an elephant! As a reward for this good shooting I gave her a pair of diamond bracelets and also scattered one thousand *ashrafis* (gold coins) over her.”

Jahangir spent several months in his City of Joy. It was said to be a memorable period in his life.

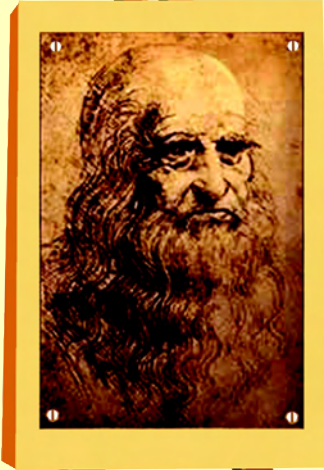
- Swapna Dutta

SCIENCE FAIR



- By **Rosscode
Krishna Pillai**

APRIL-BORN: LEONARDO DA VINCI



Leonardo da Vinci, the world's most celebrated and enigmatic genius of all time, was born on April 15, 1452 near Vinci in the Tuscan hills of Italy. His father was a landholder and his mother a peasant woman. Leonardo had his early schooling in Vinci. Even at that time, he used to astonish his teachers with a wide range of questions and doubts. His formal education ended when he, 14 years old, moved from Vinci to Florence and started working as an apprentice in the workshop of a gifted artist, sculptor and bronze-caster. Naturally skilled in drawing, Leonardo took to oil painting in a big way.

In 1482, Leonardo (30) left Florence to be employed by the Duke of Milan as artist and engineer. He executed quite a few major architectural and engineering works for domed churches and cathedrals. He also fabricated a screw 'cutting machine and a turret windmill, which were all ahead of his time. His innate creative genius began to blossom during his 16 years' stay in Milan. Thereafter, all his life he was deeply immersed in an insatiable quest for knowledge and turned more and more to keen scientific observations.

He started writing down his multifarious ideas, illustrated with detailed drawings, diagrams, designs and sketches with utmost precision, in several notebooks, totalling nearly 7,000 pages. His original concepts anticipated, for the first time in history, modern inventions like the aeroplane, helicopter, parachutes, the military tank, submarines, firearms, a calculator, elevators, and many other elaborate mechanical gadgets. They also suggested the use of solar power and dealt with astronomy, mathematics, mechanics, optics, architecture, civil engineering, hydraulics, geology and the study of fossils. The sketches show the results of the accurate studies he had made of the human anatomy including the structure of the heart and its valves and the muscles and bones. It is said that his anatomical drawings hold good even to this day. He considered the Earth to be rotating on its own axis and not to be at the centre of the universe. He wrote that the moon was earthlike in nature and was shining by reflected sunlight. In his notebooks, he had used an extraordinary method in writing the letters reversed from right to left which required a mirror to read. It was only in the 19th and 20th centuries that they were decoded, translated and interpreted.

In 1502, while working as a military architect, he made a number of war engines and prepared maps of Italy and thus laid the groundwork for modern cartography. Next year he returned to Florence and in the next five years he did a number of paintings including his most famous *Mona Lisa*. Leonardo's 17 paintings that have survived are considered masterpieces.

In 1516, he was invited by the French king, Francis I, and appointed as his court painter and architect. He died in France on May 2, 1519, when he was 67.

HUMAN SALIVA: NATURAL PAINKILLER



A team of French researchers led by Dr. Catherine Rougeot of the Pasteur Institute in Paris has discovered a powerful natural painkiller in human saliva. The scientists have named the compound **Opiorphin**. They have found it to be several times more powerful than morphine, the common painkiller. "Our discovery of opiorphin is extremely exciting from a physiological point of view," they said in a paper published in the U.S. journal, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

They claim that this discovery will have a number of human applications including better clinical treatment of pain and could result in improved pain medications. Opiorphin, which is quickly metabolized, was found to be equally effective against chemical-induced inflammation. It can also act in biological conditions involving anxiety, aggression and emotional and motivational responses.

Not much is known as yet about opiorphin, a naturally occurring molecule, said Dr. Rougeot, director of the Pasteur Institute's Laboratory of Pharmacology of Neuroendocrine Regulation. "It is not even known where in the body the substance is produced," she added. "Now, we are exploring its presence in other human biological tissues. Maybe it is localized in the blood, the brain." According to her, its function at physiological levels has to be characterised and it has to be learnt by which tissues it is produced.

GALILEO QUOTES

"I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him."



"I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect intended us to forego their use."



"To excite in us tastes, odours, and sounds, I believe that nothing is required in external bodies except shapes, numbers, and slow or rapid movements.... if ears, tongues, and noses were removed, shapes and numbers and motions would remain, but not odours or tastes or sounds."

SCIENCE QUIZ



1. What is the hydrolytic reaction of fats with caustic soda known as?
a. acetylation; b. carboxylation;
c. saponification; d. esterification.
2. What does the term "anaerobic" mean?
a. without glucose; b. with glucose; c. presence of oxygen; d. without oxygen.
3. Which of the following has a major role in the clotting of blood?
a. leucocytes; b. platelets; c. lymphocytes;
d. erythrocytes.
4. What was the name of the first experimental set-up in which a controlled nuclear fission was carried out?
a. nuclear plant; b. uranium kiln; c. atomic pile;
d. atomic reactor.

ANSWER: 1. c. saponification, 2. d. without oxygen, 3. b. platelets, 4. c. atomic pile - it was designed by Enrico Fermi in 1942.



Story so far : While Princess Devaki, soon after her marriage to Prince Vasudeva, was being driven in a chariot to the palace of her bridegroom, who was seated by her side, a voice from the skies warned Kamsa, the demoniac King of Mathura, that the eighth issue of his sister, the princess, would be the cause of his death. At once Kamsa raised his sword in order to finish the princess off.

“**S**Stop, O King Kamsa! Stop!” cried out many a voice, aghast and horrified. Some of the men and women, who saw Kamsa’s sword dazzling in the lightning, swooned away.

The crack of thunder following the lightning was deafening enough, but the roar that followed the sound surpassed it both in volume and terror.

It was from Kamsa. He was threatening Prince

Vasudeva with dire consequences, for the prince had taken hold of the tyrant’s right arm in the nick of time, preventing him from striking Devaki with his sword.

“What! Must I allow the woman, who would mother my mortal foe, to live? Must I prove that foolish? Shouldn’t I nip the menace in the bud?” Kamsa threw his angry question at Vasudeva whose grip had grown tighter on his wrist.

“O King! How can you turn a blind eye to your dharma? Isn’t your duty, as the king, to protect the innocent and the helpless? How can you do the opposite?” Thus did an old counsellor dare to take Kamsa to task.

“Don’t blabber out nonsense! King or commoner, one’s first duty is to secure one’s own safety!” Kamsa yelled out.

“Think for a moment about the example you’re going to set, O Kamsa! Killing a hapless woman – a sister at that – and within hours of her marriage – and before a crowd of thousands – is bound to have far-reaching consequences. Never, never will you find a human heart that will have any feeling of love or respect for you!” said an elderly kinsman.

Said another: “You’ll go down in history not only as a tyrant but as a coward. Any man with the slightest trait of nobility in his character would prefer death to living with the kind of reputation you’re going to earn if you do what you intend doing!”



2. THE TYRANT STRIKES

“Shut up!” screamed Kamsa. “Enough of your stupid sermons.” With a sudden jerk he got his hand free from Vasudeva’s grip and raised his sword once again.

But Vasudeva sprang up between him and Devaki. “Listen, my friend,” he said. “Don’t be impatient. Far way off is the prospect of our eighth child. I promise, I shall hand over to you not only our eighth child, but all the seven born before it. You may do as you like with them. Spare the life of Devaki and prove that you’re indeed a king with a conscience! Besides, the words we heard could be deceptive, coming from some mischievous beings! In case you realise this afterwards, can you undo what you do now led by your raw impulse?”

Kamsa paused. Earnest pleadings from the elders and the promise made by Vasudeva softened him. He looked at the silent multitude that had cheered him only moments ago. He could read the awe and revulsion writ large on their faces.

He put his sword back in its sheath. Fixing a stern gaze on Vasudeva, he said: “People say that like the star Dhruva which never changes its position, you never swerve from your promise. Thousands of our subjects stand witness to what you have just now declared. As soon as a child is born to your wife, you must surrender it to me. But I’ll take no chances. Both of you shall live as my prisoners until Devaki has been delivered of her eighth child and I have done away with that one!”

Kamsa got off the chariot and walked back to his palace in the opposite direction, followed by his closest courtiers and ministers.

The procession continued towards its destination, but under a shadow of gloom. Drums and flutes had fallen silent and hardly did anybody utter a word. The sobs of Princess Devaki and her maids mingled with the sighs of the throng.

Kamsa proved in no time that what he had said was not a mere threat. Devaki and Vasudeva were confined to a small house, a part of Kamsa’s palace complex, with sentries posted all around it.

Days passed. Disquiet was writ large on Kamsa’s face. He was growing restless and tense. As a result, he was crueller than before. But for a few flatterers and some



cunning ministers, even his courtiers now avoided him. Those who incurred his slightest displeasure were punished brutally; he showed no respect to sages and savants either. Not conscience, but pride and passion ruled him, and he ruled his kingdom no better than a monster.

He did not have a wink of sleep the night the maids attending upon Devaki informed him that the princess was expected to give birth to her first child any moment. Although he had nothing to fear from the first or even the next six issues to follow, he could not tide over the waves of anxiety that beleaguered him.

At midnight, the chief of the sentries came rushing. “My lord,” he said, “I’ve just heard the cry of the newborn coming from Princess Devaki’s room.”

“Run and see to it that the guards remain alert,” ordered Kamsa. “I’ll be there in a moment.”

But Kamsa was not required to walk up to the makeshift prison housing Devaki and Vasudeva. The truthful Vasudeva had picked up the child – a lovely doll-like boy – and, without looking back, was on his way to meet Kamsa. Devaki, submerged in sorrow, walked

behind him with great difficulty. The alert guards followed them and Devaki's horrified maids followed the guards.

Kamsa and Vasudeva met midway along the corridor. "Here's our first child, my friend," said Vasudeva as he placed the infant before Kamsa. "As promised, I submit it to your mercy."

"My brother!" cried out Devaki falling at Kamsa's feet. "Allow this innocent nephew of yours to live. He'll serve you when he grows up. What harm can he do to you, the mighty king of kings?"

While Vasudeva's truthfulness impressed Kamsa, Devaki's pleadings pleased him. After all, it was not her eighth child! He could afford to be merciful.

"All right, take it away!" he said, waving his hand.

Tears of joy streamed down Devaki's cheeks. "You're noble, my brother!" she said, and the couple returned to their prison with the child.

* * * *

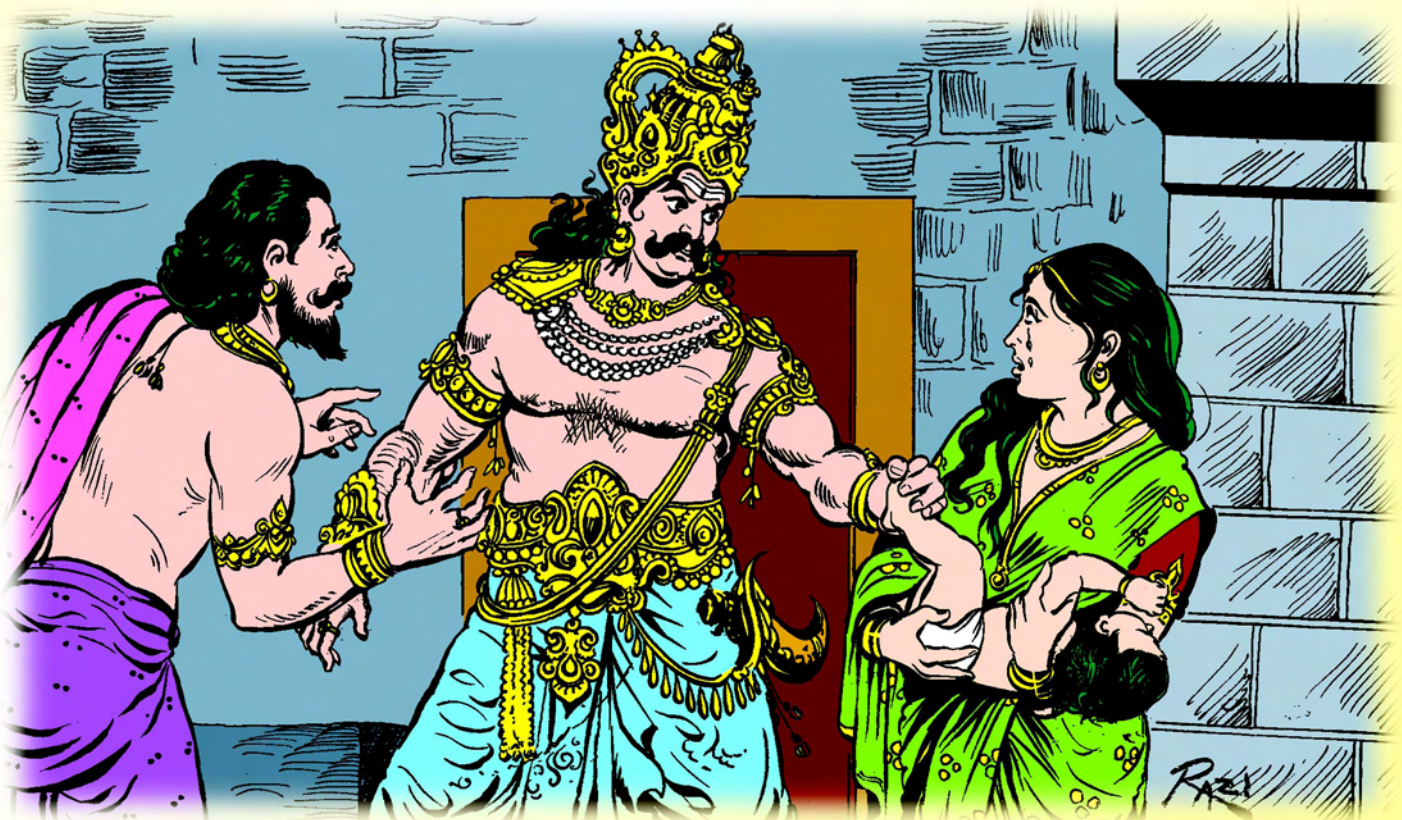
"So kind and compassionate a king had never ruled the earth," commented a courtier. "The court-poet ought to write an epic narrating the noble gesture of our king," said another.

Kamsa beamed with pride. It was morning and he was in the company of his friends and flatterers. "Why, my lord," said yet another, "great though you are for your compassion, should you allow that virtue to over-rule your prudence? True, the voice of prophecy said that it is only Devaki's eighth child that would be your adversary, but who can say if the gods aren't up to some mischief? The foe might arrive earlier than has been prophesied! Isn't it enough that you've spared Devaki's life? As a well-wisher, I must warn you against your extravagant compassion!"

The brutality in Kamsa's nature, suppressed for a while, sparked off. His eyes glowed abominably. Without a word he unsheathed his sword and made a dash for Devaki's room. Before the panicky princess had understood what he was up to, he had snatched her child away.

Devaki shrieked in horror and fell unconscious. Vasudeva looked on helpless. Kamsa went into the courtyard. There lay a slab of stone. He raised the child, holding it by its tiny legs, and brought it down upon it – to its instant death.

Nobody dared raise a murmur. *(To continue)*





The secret source of humour
itself is not joy, but sorrow.
There is no humour in
heaven.

- Mark Twain



A guy says to his friend, "Guess how
many coins I have in my pocket."
The friend says, "If I guess right,
will you give me one of them?"
The first guy says, "If you guess
right, I'll give you both of them!"

LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!

A college student in a
philosophy class was taking his
first examination.

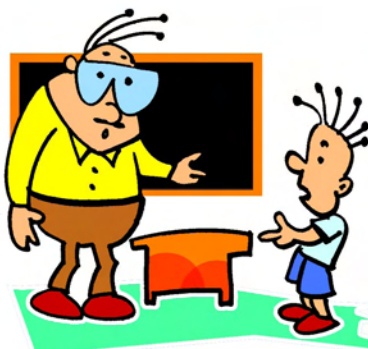
On the paper there was a
single line which simply said:
"Is this a question?" - Discuss.
After a short time he wrote:
"If that is a question, then
this is an answer."

The student received an "A" for the exam.



Teacher: What is the axis of the earth?

Student: The axis of the earth is an imaginary line, which
passes from one pole to the
other, and on which the earth
revolves.



Teacher: Very good. Now, could
you hang clothes on that line?

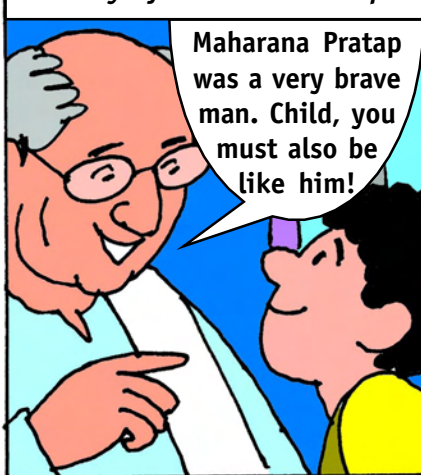
Student: Yes, Sir.

Teacher: Indeed, and what sort
of clothes?

Student: Imaginary clothes, Sir.

DUSHTU DATTU

Dattu's grandfather is telling him
the story of Maharana Pratap.

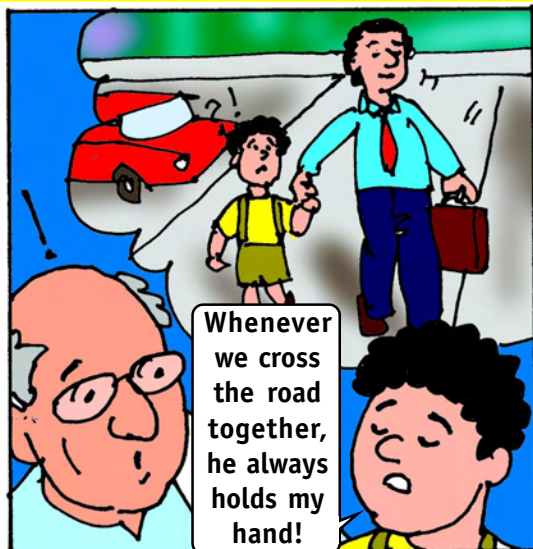


Maharana Pratap
was a very brave
man. Child, you
must also be
like him!

But Grandpa, Papa
is not at all brave!



Why
do you say
that?



Whenever
we cross
the road
together,
he always
holds my
hand!



FALSE CHARGE

While Brahmadrutta ruled Benaras, the Bodhisattva was born as a Kshatriya in a certain village of Magadha. His name was Magha. There were thirty households in the village. All the thirty householders used to gather at a common place to discuss the village affairs. The villagers were given to a sinful way of living, committed thefts and murders, and escaped punishment by bribing the village officer. Sometimes they paid fines for their crimes.

The meeting place was in a state of utter neglect, often filled with rubbish heaps. Magha cleared a place for himself, but another man usurped it. Magha cleared and cleaned another place, but this too was taken away. In this way Magha cleared and cleaned up the entire meeting place, and put up an awning so that the villagers could sit in the shade. The villagers were greatly pleased at the convenience brought about by Magha's efforts.

All the other householders were soon drawn towards Magha. They came under his leadership, and began to take part in the activities undertaken by Magha for the improvement of the village. They built a fine building for their meetings, and made arrangements for drinking water. They gave up their sinful ways, learnt the Five Virtues from Magha, and engaged themselves in fruitful labour.

Each day they set out with picks and spades, levelled the highways, built causeways, filled up the pits, dug tanks and cut the branches of trees on the roadside, so that they did not obstruct the chariots from going on the roads. Magha was their leader in all these activities.

The one person who was not happy about all this was the village officer. While the villagers indulged in drinking, dacoities and murders, this officer profited greatly through the bribes and fines he obtained from them. Now that the villagers had turned a new leaf, the officer lost this income. So, he went to the King and complained to him: "Your Majesty, Magha is spreading anarchy in our village. He has gathered together all the householders, and is inciting them to commit acts of terror. Every day they haunt the highways with picks, axes and crowbars, and cause menace to the people. I beg you to end this state of affairs."

The King sent a batch of armed men with the officer, instructing them to verify the truth of the complaint and arrest the culprits, if necessary. These armed men saw Magha and his followers on the highways in the vicinity of the village. All of them were "armed", and the officer's complaint was apparently justified. The King's men, at

A JATAKA TALE

once, arrested Magha and his followers, and took them to the court of the King.

The King saw the “weapons” in the hands of the culprits. It never occurred to him that these “weapons” were implements of social service. He was satisfied that the charge against these men was proved. Without holding any trial, he gave orders that the men be trampled upon by elephants’ feet.

The official elephant was got ready to carry out the King’s sentence. The elephant stopped at some distance from the men and then, as though frightened, it turned back and raced away. Another elephant was brought, but it too ran away at the sight of the condemned men.

“It is possible that the culprits have some talismans on their bodies. That explains the fright of the elephants. Search the culprits and remove all such talismans,” the King said when he heard of the episode.

This, however, proved to be a wrong guess. For none of the accused was found wearing any talisman. This surprised the King. “Send the accused to me,” he told his men. “I shall find out their secret.”

Magha and the other villagers were brought before the King. “Why are the elephants afraid of you?” the King asked them. “Isn’t true that you chant some secret spells? Do you know any powerful spells?”

“O King,” Magha replied, “what you say is quite true. We’ve got a powerful spell, none more powerful in all the world!”

“What’s it?” the king asked.

“We do not take life,” Magha replied, “nor take what is not offered, nor commit acts of sin, nor utter a lie. We abstain from intoxicating drinks. We love life, we are kind to living creatures. We do acts of charity. We level the roads, dig tanks and build rest-houses. This is our secret spell, our strength.”

The King was stunned. “What is this you say?” he asked Magha. “I was told that you haunt the highways, frighten the wayfarers and loot them. Is that all false?”

“Sire,” Magha answered, “you believed what you were told. You never held a trial and found out the truth.”

“My men caught you red handed. You were found with picks, axes, crow-bars and other weapons. So I did not hold a trial.”

“O King,” Magha replied, “they are our implements. With them we cut down the protruding branches of trees and clear the roads for the chariots, level the roads, dig tanks and so on. We always carry them.”

Now the King held a belated trial and found that what Magha said was quite true. The village officer had foisted a false charge on these good villagers. The King confiscated all the money the village officer had hoarded over the years and distributed it to the villagers saying, “From now on, you shall be the masters of your own village. I am not appointing any more officers in your village.”

The King also made a gift of the royal elephant to the villagers and sent them away.





THE TIGER'S PRANKS

Many, many years ago, there lived a tiger named Carlos who, when he was a cub, was taken away by the village children when he was found alone in the jungle. The village folks reared him and kept him among their farm animals. Carlos grew up like one of them. He ate carrots with the rabbits and oats with the horses. The cows gave him lots of milk to drink and the goats gave him cheese to eat and Mrs Hen gave him a nice big egg once in a while. It was strange, but he never enjoyed meat when it was placed before him.

When Carlos grew up, he became a stubborn little animal and liked to play pranks with the village folk.

After a while, the people of the village realized that Carlos didn't mean to harm them, but they got fed up with his pranks and decided to catch him and sell him to the zoo.

The men brought nets and ropes and went out in search of him. When Carlos saw the men with the nets and ropes in their hands,

he didn't know what they were planning. He then saw the women go off to the river to do the washing. Only the little children and the old people were left in the village. Carlos liked watching the villagers go about their chores, and one of his favourite spots to watch their activity was in old the banyan tree.

"Move over," Carlos heard a low growl and a very fierce-looking tiger leaped up into the tree alongside him. "I'm hungry. These old people look a bit skinny, but the children would be tasty."

Carlos was horrified. He didn't want the villagers to be eaten. But how was he going to stop this tiger from eating them up? He had to think up a plan. "You should wait for the women to come back," he said to the tiger. "They are much plumper and would be more tastier."

"A very good idea," said the fierce tiger. "I'm not that hungry. So I can wait."

As the women started to come back with their baskets of laundry, the fierce tiger got ready to leap out of the tree.

"Wait!" said Carlos who liked the womenfolk because they left food for him.

"Why fill your belly with all these women when you can have man-chops? The men of the village will be back soon."

The fierce tiger smacked his lips. "I think I'll give up the entrée and go straight for the main meal," he said.

It was sunset when Carlos heard the sounds of the men returning from their hunt. He could also hear the fierce tiger's tummy rumbling. Nothing was going to stop the big tiger this time. He just hoped that the men would be ready with the nets and ropes he had seen them carrying. Luckily, the fierce tiger was so excited by the sight of all the men, he didn't notice the nets and ropes as he leaped out of the tree.

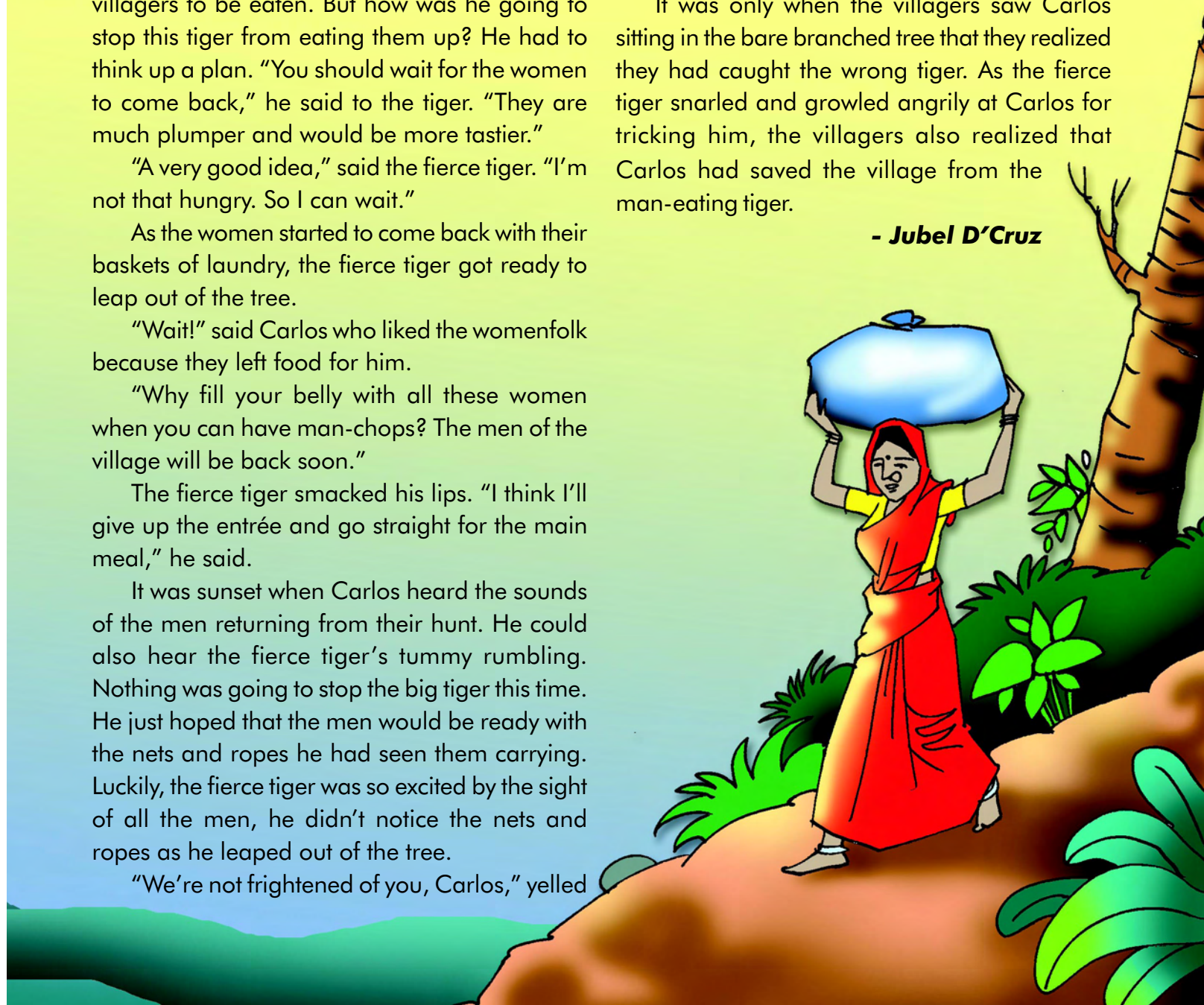
"We're not frightened of you, Carlos," yelled

the men as they threw the net over the fierce tiger who they thought was Carlos and bundled him up and tied his paws together with the rope. "You're now off to the zoo," they said.

It was then that Carlos realized that the villagers had meant to catch him and send him away. Tears rolled down his cheeks and he began to cry. He had never meant to hurt anyone. All he wanted was to have some fun. As he cried, he shook. He shook so much that the old banyan tree couldn't hold onto its leaves and they all dropped off.

It was only when the villagers saw Carlos sitting in the bare branched tree that they realized they had caught the wrong tiger. As the fierce tiger snarled and growled angrily at Carlos for tricking him, the villagers also realized that Carlos had saved the village from the man-eating tiger.

- Jubel D'Cruz





KIPLING MUSEUM

A metal plaque at the entrance to a bungalow in Mumbai says: "Rudyard Kipling, son of Lockwood Kipling, was born here on 30-12-1865". At the porch is a bust of the great author, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature a hundred years ago.

Plans are afoot to convert the building into a museum for the author of the classic *Jungle Book* featuring Mowgli, who was abandoned in the jungle and who was reared by a wolf. The 140-year-old wood-and-stone structure was the residence of Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911), one time art teacher and illustrator, who took over as Instructor at the JJ School of Art set up in 1857. He built the bungalow at that time for his use. In subsequent years, it became the quarters of the Dean of the School of Art. Most of Rudyard's books were illustrated by Kipling Sr.



INDIAN CHILD'S TALENT

Three year old Madhava Krishnan of Sunnyvale, California, is able to rattle off the names of the capitals of all 50 US states and those of many of the countries of Asia, Africa and Europe. A video sharing the website called 'youtube' has already been hit 900,000 times till March 12, evoking comments from nearly 4,000 surfers. Madhava can also repeat the American Pledge of Allegiance and even mention the short names of the different US states, besides spell out difficult words. Madhava Krishnan's parents vow that they had never "pushed" their son to learn anything, which he seems to have done on his own.



VEDIC HYMN TO OPEN ASSEMBLY IN U.S.A.

The American state of Nevada started its Assembly on March 19 with a prayer – a verse from the *Rig Veda*, believed to be the oldest scripture in the world. The four line verse offers inspiration, reflection and optimism. The verse was chanted by Rajan Zed, Director of Public Affairs of Hindu Temples of Northern Nevada. It was later included in the *Daily Journal* of the Assembly which is a permanent public record.

KALEIDOSCOPE



HOUSE ARREST

This happened when I was in the fifth Standard. One afternoon grandma, my sister, and I were alone at home. My sister was asleep, and I was reading the latest issue of "Chandamama".

My grandma came in with some potato chips on a plate, shutting the door behind her. We ate the chips, and when I went to open the door to drink a cup of water, the door would not open! It did not open even when grandma tried. I hurried to open the door which led to the

balcony. The balcony has two doors—one to the bedroom and the other to the hall. I thought of going to the hall, but alas I found it bolted from outside.

We were literally trapped! Grandma cried out "O Ganesha! I shall go round your temple 108 times if we can escape from here." Meanwhile, my sister got up. Luckily for us, the front door was open. The door bell rang. A man hearing us shout, opened the door for us. He said, he had come to repair the vacuum cleaner. I believe that it was Lord Ganesha himself who had come to rescue us.

Later I joined grandma in circumambulating the temple 108 times.

-B. Ragavi (11), Chennai

RIDDLES

1. It takes many knocks but never cries.
What is it?

-S. Vismitha (12), Bangalore

2. What is the difference between jewellers
and jailors?

-N. Ashish (13), Rajahmundry

3. What gets wetter the more it dries?

4. I'm small, white and
round
Am served at a table
In gatherings of two or four
When first served
There's love all around.
What am I?

-B. Ragavi (11), Chennai

(Turn to page 36)





THE FATE OF GREED

"What do you want?" the angel asked,
 "A life immortal," said the man.

"Is that the utmost?" enquired the angel,
 "That's the beginning," said the man.

"I want unending youth,
 "I want to have all success
 Without any despair.

"I want to be the king of all,
 A king without enemies,
 A God himself."

Then said the angel quite robust,
 "I see, your greed has no ending space
 And so from now, you shall
 Be nothing but dust,
 And wind and rain and heat
 Shall purge thee with their heavenly mace."

Kartik Agrawal (15), Meerut Cantt

THE ICE-CREAM STOP

The circus train made an ice-cream stop,
 At the fifty-two flavour ice-cream stand.

All the animals got off the train,
 And walked straight up to the ice-cream stand.

"I'll take Vanilla!" yelled the gorilla,
 "Lemon and Lime for me!" growled the lion,
 "I'll take Chocolate," cried the ocelot,
 "I'll take Strawberry," chirped the canary.

Said the ice-cream man, "Till I see a dime,
 You'll get no ice-cream of mine."

The animals snarled and screeched and
 howled

And gobbled up the whole ice-cream stand,
 All the fifty-two flavours
 (Fifty-three, with the ice-cream man).

-Aditi Patil (6), Pune





A man goes to the library to return a book and bangs it on the table and says: "Too many characters, and no

story at all!"

Librarian : So, you were the one who took away the Telephone Directory? We were missing it here.



Mohan : Raju, read this, it says nobody can travel to Sun.

Raju : It's not very correct; why, I can go to Sun.

Mohan : How can you? It's so hot up there!

Raju : I'll go in the night, when it will be cold.



B. Vijayalakshmi (13), Avadi



Doctor : Your heart is beating very slow.

Patient : I'm not surprised, doctor, I drive a goods train.

S. Vismitha (12), Bangalore

A man parked his car in a NO PARKING area. When he returned to fetch his car, he found this sticker on the windscreen : "PARKING FINE". He wrote below : "Thanks for the compliment."

G. Kripesh Teja (10), Chennai



A man goes to a hotel, and eats his lunch. Later, the manager finds him washing the basin.

He asks : "Hey, mister, what're you doing?"

Customer : "See the board. It says : WASH BASIN".



B. Ragavi (11), Chennai

Teacher : Who signed the American Declaration of Independence?
Student (rather rudely) : I don't know.

Next day, the boy's father is summoned.



Teacher : Your son was rude while answering a question. I had asked him, who signed the American Declaration of Independence?

Father : Son, just tell her the truth if you had signed it.

D. Rajarishi (13), Kotagiri

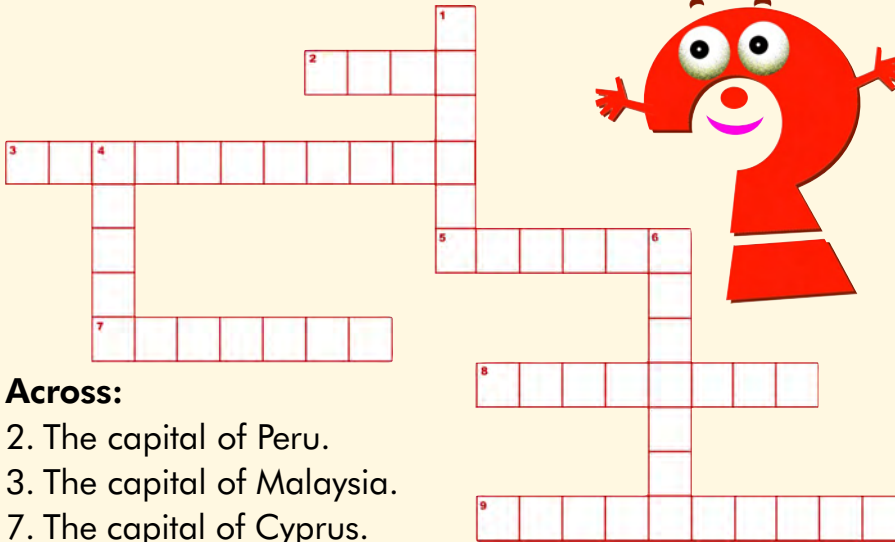
Praveen : What's the difference between elephants and houseflies?
Naveen : Very simple. Houseflies can sit on an elephant, but an elephant cannot sit on a housefly!



L. Bhanuprasad (14), Hyderabad

CROSSWORD

Here is a crossword on the capitals of countries.
Use the clues given below to solve it.



Across:

2. The capital of Peru.
3. The capital of Malaysia.
7. The capital of Cyprus.
5. The capital of Ireland.
8. The capital of Yugoslavia.
9. The capital of U.S.A.

Down:

1. The capital of Spain.

4. The capital of Jordan.
6. The capital of Kenya.

- Shamika Kumar (10),
Chennai

9. Which girl continues to make blunders?
10. Why were the Dark Ages so confusing?

-Saurab Savara (12),
Mumbai



11. What do you tell a skeleton that does not like work?

12. What do you call a sleeping bull?



13. Why does a cow wear a bell?

-Kunal Makhija
(8), Mumbai

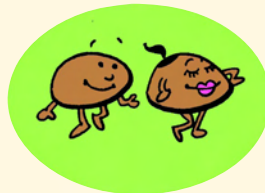
(from page 33)

RIDDLES



5. What did the shy baby pebble say when the cute girl pebble went by?

6. What is the tornado's favourite dance?



7. An old lady, brown in colour, has all-white hair. Who is she?

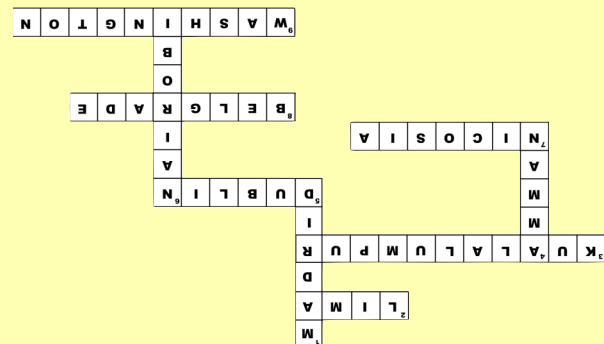
-V.J. Madhuvratha (12), Mumbai

8. How do you cut through waves?



1. Door, 2. Jewellers sell watches, tailors watch cells, 3. Towel, 4. Table tennis ball, 5. I wish I were a little boulder, 6. The twist, 7. Snow-clad mountain, 8. Using a sea-saw, 9. Miss-take, 10. Because they were the days of the (k)nights, 11. Lazybones, 12. Bull-dozers, 13. Because its horns don't work.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES:



SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD:

BOOK REVIEW

ANIMALS IN FOLK TRADITIONS

***Animal Folk Tales from Around the World, Vol 1, 2, 3,
retold by Santhini Govindan, Panda Books,
an imprint of Unicorn Books, New Delhi***

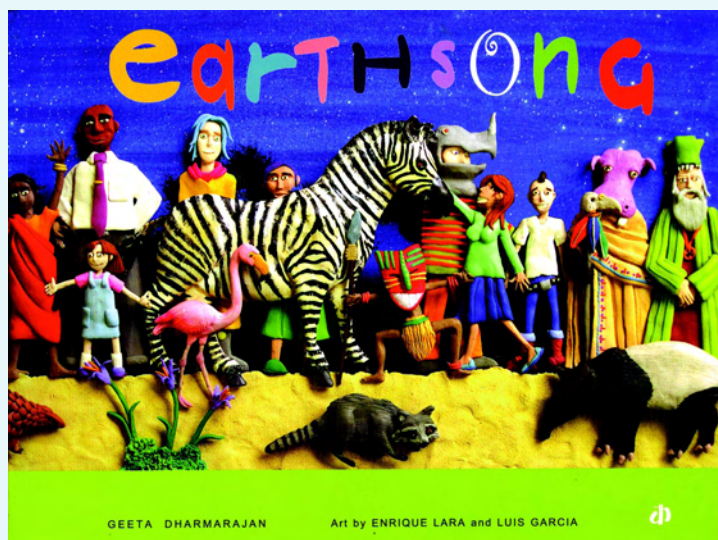
These slim volumes of interesting animal stories, rewritten for children by Santhini Govindan, a renowned children's writer, have six stories, each drawn from folk traditions around the world. Indian folk tales are well represented by stories from Assam, Meghalaya and Orissa, beside the well-known story of how squirrels got their stripes, retold from the *Ramayana*. And if you are not convinced that it was Lord Rama who gave the squirrels their stripes, you can take your choice of another yarn on the same theme—this time spun by the Native American Iroquois!

Most stories take off from the unique physical appearance or habits of different animals and attempt a fascinating explanation of these attributes. So, you have stories that tell you how the crocodile got its scaly skin and why dogs bark at strangers, and why the hawk and crow are not friends. Each story is not only amusing and lively, but contributes to a better understanding of the place of its origin, of which these animals are obviously natives.

The books are well-written for the most part, although the language tends occasionally to be heavy and not so child-friendly. Profusely illustrated, every page is a riot of colours which, although attractive, often seems to be a case of overkill.

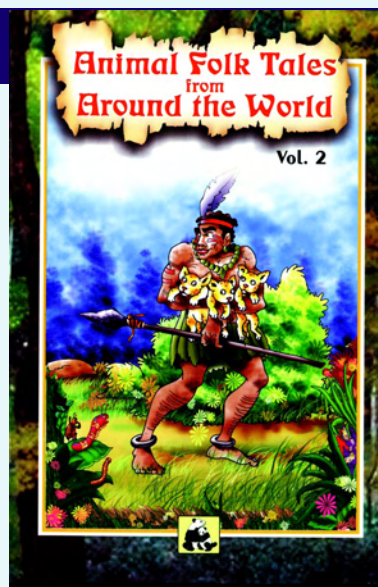
***EARTHSONG by Geeta Dharmarajan,
published by Katha, New Delhi, art by Enrique Lara and Luis Garcia***

'To men and women, children too/Our earth's a gift in green and blue,' sings Geeta Dharmarajan, and her exuberant love for all things natural comes home vividly to young readers in this enchanting book that is a tribute to this Earth and all life on it.

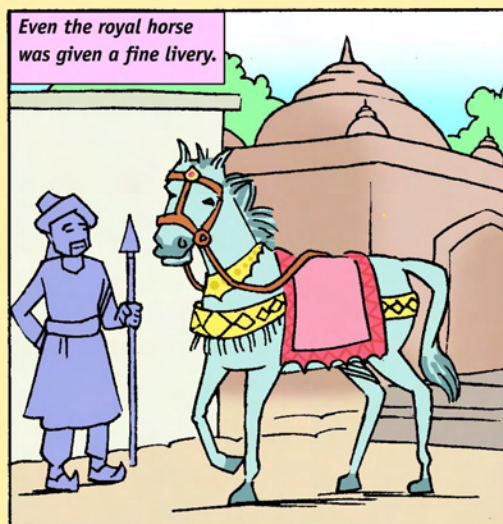
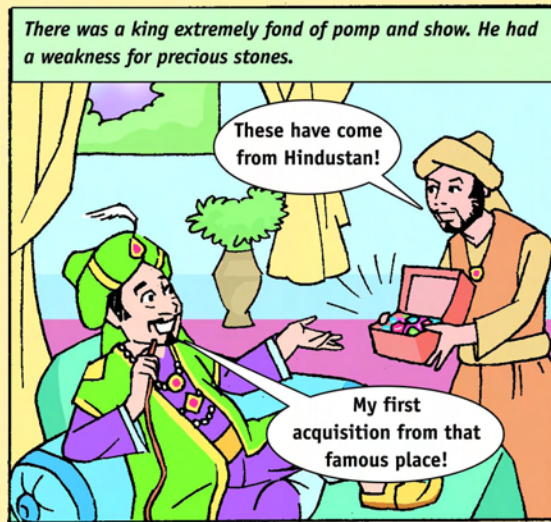


The book moves through different habitats and environments and explores each along with the life forms in it. Nothing is left unturned – worms and snails are treated with as much respect and dignity as elephants and big banyan trees receive! The book uses a variety of means to instil in children love and a healthy sense of respect and concern for Earth. Delightfully illustrated with textures and figures inspired by plasticine art, set against brilliantly-coloured backgrounds, the book presents a perfect balance of text and pictures.

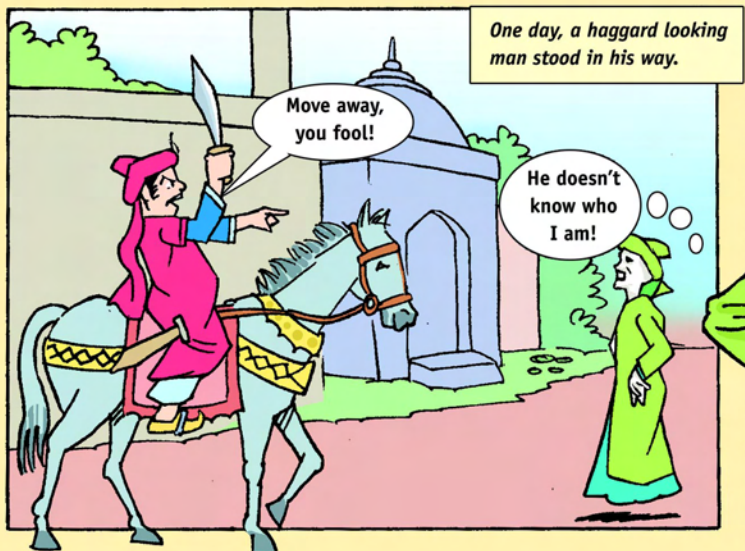
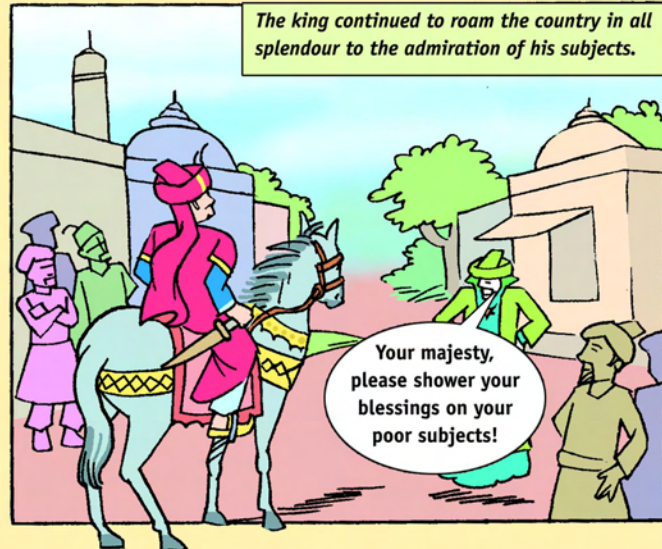
- Sumati Sudhakar



THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



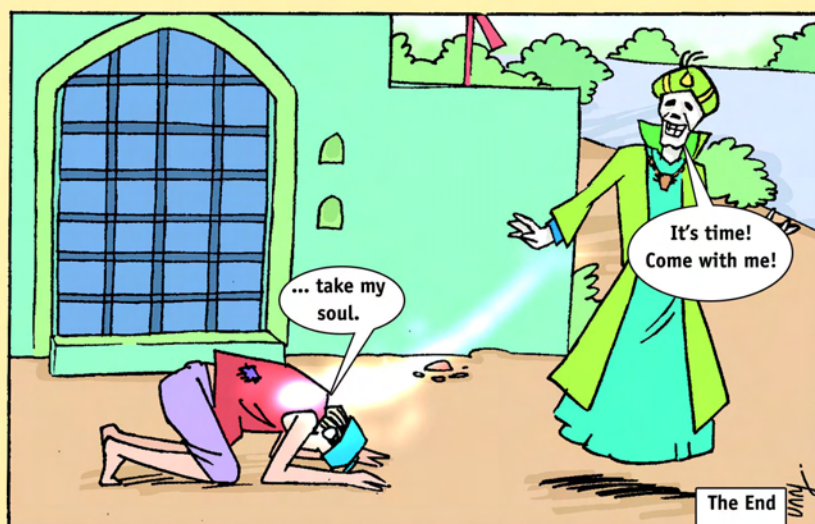
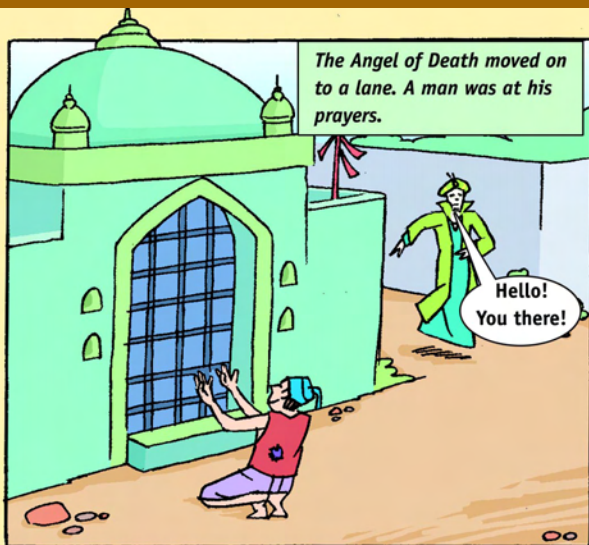
IT IS TIME!

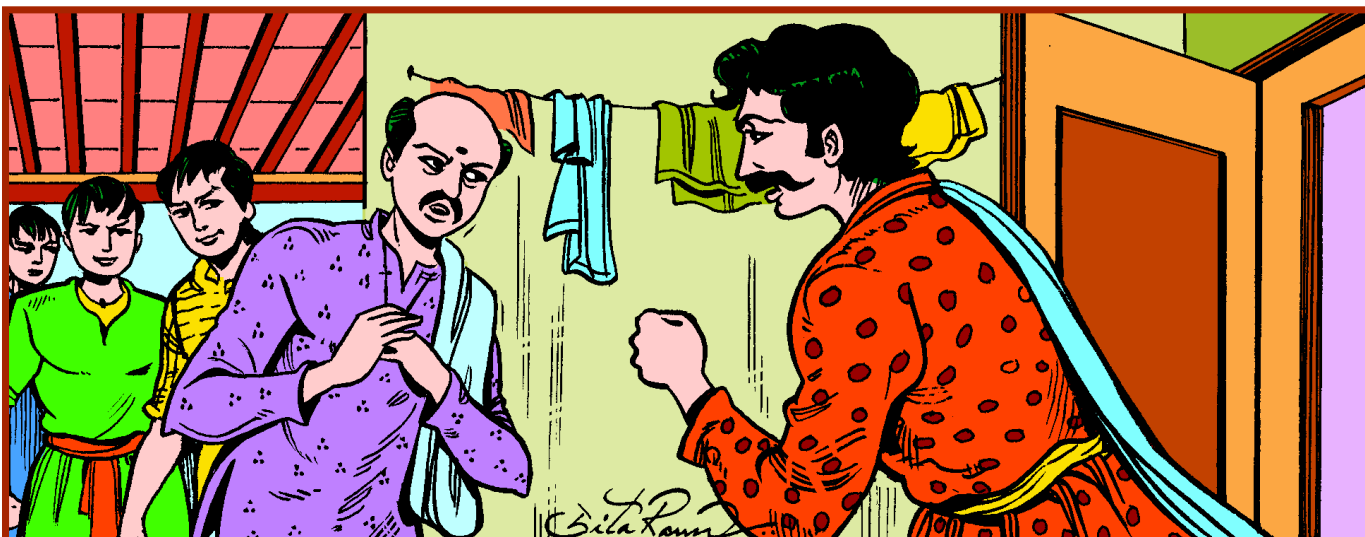


THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



IT IS TIME!





WRONG INTERPRETATION OF GITA

Merchant Dharmaraj was thoroughly vexed with his son Murli. During his childhood days, he fell into bad company and dropped out of school. As he grew up, he became an irresponsible fellow, and spent his father's money recklessly. Soon, Dharmaraj stopped giving any money to Murli. That did not deter him from borrowing money from others. Those who had lent him money earlier, with the hope that his father would pay off the debt, were annoyed when Dharmaraj refused to settle the dues. He clearly told his debtors that they could do whatever they wanted with his son and that he would not help him in any way. The agitated debtors threatened Murli that they would report the matter to the police if he did not clear the dues within two days.

Murli was dismayed that his father had refused to come to his help at a critical situation. He approached his friends for help, but none was willing to help him. At last, one of his friends, Keshav, suggested: "Murli, there's one way out. We shall go the next village and burgle the zamindar's house. We shall share the loot. It would help you to clear your debts and avoid

getting arrested by the police." Murli was shocked to hear the plan. "It's dangerous!" said Murli. "If we get caught, we shall land up in prison."

"Murli, if you don't clear the debt within two days, then also you would land up in prison. Better to take the risk of looting than to meekly surrender to your debtors! Come to the village temple tonight and wait for me. I shall join you there."

Murli did not like the idea at all. However, finding no other alternative, he decided to go with his friend for the loot. He went to the temple late that evening. After reaching there, his conscience started troubling him. He wanted to back out from the plan and return home, when he happened to listen the discourse by the temple priest. He was explaining some passages from the *Bhagavad Gita*.

"Your own actions are responsible for the results. You have to perform your actions dispassionately. While there is a choice for you in performing actions, there is no choice as far as the results are concerned. These are determined by God and will reach you at a time and in such a manner as determined by him. To

have a peace of mind, perform all actions on behalf of God and dedicate the results to him."

The doubt which Murli hitherto had regarding looting suddenly cleared on hearing the sermon. "All right! To achieve results, I've to perform actions. I shall do the looting on behalf of God and dedicate the result to him." When Keshav joined him, both hurried to the next village in the dead of night, entered the zamindar's house stealthily and made a bold attempt to loot money from the chest. Unfortunately, both were caught by the zamindar's men, who thrashed them.

The zamindar intervened and stopped his men from beating them. He was shocked to find that one of the culprits was the son of Dharmaraj. When he tried to advise him against the wrong deed, Murli strongly reacted: "I've done this on behalf of God and I've already dedicated the result to God before venturing. So the result, whether good or bad, should go to God and not to me! You can't beat me or hand me over to the police. You do this to God who preaches like this in the *Gita*."

The zamindar was shocked to hear his reply. "My son! Who put this idea into your mind? Who told you about the *Gita*?"

"None other than the temple priest! I heard his sermon tonight at the temple. Only then did I resolve to do this."

The temple priest was sent for at once. The zamindar told him what had happened and asked him for an explanation.

The priest was aghast. "Sir! It's true that I was citing a passage from the *Gita*. But this young man probably does not know in what context I was telling the same. He has not heard my discourse fully and has wrongly interpreted what little he has heard. When Arjuna was hesitating to fight against his own kith and kin, Lord Krishna urges him to perform his actions or duty dispassionately setting aside his



sentiments and the consequences from his mind in order to uphold the sanctity of 'dharma'. This boy seems to have misunderstood that he could do evil acts also in the name of God and get away from the consequences by dedicating the results to God! This is purely due to his immaturity. I'm prepared to explain the *Gita* fully to him!"

Only then did it dawn on Murli that in his haste, he had misinterpreted the words of the priest. He fell down at the feet of the zamindar and asked for mercy. When Murli explained to him what compelled him to commit the act, the zamindar sympathized with him and said, "I'm sure you won't commit such things in future. I shall talk to your father and request him to clear your debts this time."

Murli thanked the zamindar wholeheartedly and told the priest: "Punditji! I shall surely come to the temple and listen to your discourse daily. That should help me turn over a new leaf."



THE STRONGEST VERSUS THE WEAKEST



For a few years in 1st century A.D. Rome was ruled by Emperor Titus. During the rule of his father, Emperor Vespasian, the young man had proved his merit as the commander of the Roman army.

It was he who conquered Jerusalem, the hoary city of the Jews. Rulers in those days could be extremely cruel. For example, Dimitian, the younger brother of Titus who succeeded him to the throne, tied a courtier to a pillar and set upon him ferocious dogs to tear him to pieces, simply because the man had dared to narrate a mild joke in his presence which he thought to be slightly offensive to him.

So, by the standard of the conduct of the powerful people of his era, Titus was a good man. But by and by he grew proud of his victory over the Jews who sacrificed their lives trying to defend their city knowing full well that they were no match for the large and brutal Roman army.

An arch had been built in his honour on the occasion of his triumphant return to Rome from Jerusalem, the remains of which, known as the Arch of Titus, can still be found. During his reign, the arch was maintained in a magnificent form. Whenever Titus happened to pass through or by the arch, his companions cheerfully reminded him of his victory and loudly sang his glory.

A legend says that flattered by his courtiers, one day Titus said that the Jews had fought in the name of their God. By defeating them he proved that he was more powerful than the Jewish God!

His courtiers shouted 'hurrah' at his observation, as if it was a very witty statement. But one mysterious voice struck a different note. It said, even the weakest of creatures could vanquish the strongest; the tiniest could destroy the biggest, for man is helpless before the course of events.

Titus, believed to be a tolerant person, suddenly lost his temper. "Who said that?" he demanded to know, trembling with rage. There was total silence.

Surprisingly, once again the voice said, "All human power, strength and triumph can burst like a bubble in the twinkling of an eye!"

But who said that? Was there a ventriloquist among the courtiers who uttered words in such a way that they sounded like coming from somewhere else?

A tinge of fear was added to the silence. Most of the courtiers probably thought that it was a supernatural warning.

In order to get rid of his uneasy feeling and also to make the situation light, Titus laughed with derision and shouted out that only cowards could think so! The courtiers joined him in his laughter and he laughed even more wildly.

As he laughed, a tiny insect entered his mouth and made its way into his nostril. Suddenly his laughter stopped, while the laughter of the courtiers continued. Before long the courtiers saw that their emperor's face looked distorted with pain. He could not eject the insect however much he tried. He felt suffocated and took to bed. He never recovered.

(M.D.)

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE WISH

It was Hari's first day as a sales executive. To learn the ropes, he was accompanying his boss, the Sales Manager, on the latter's calls.

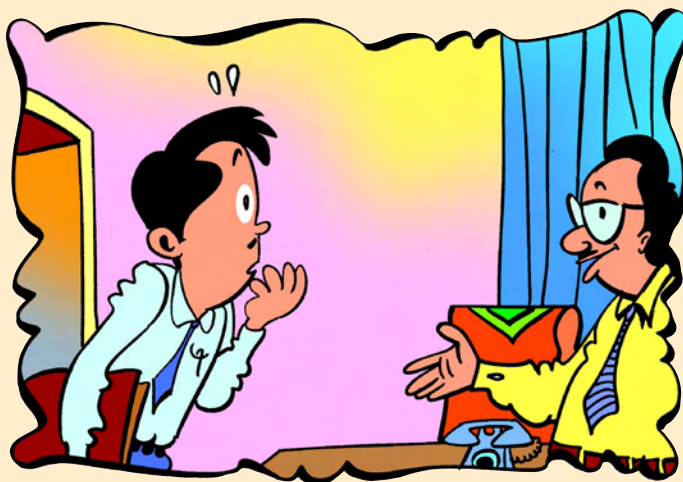
One of their calls was to a particularly difficult customer. An ignorant, self-opinionated, and pompous man, he went on interrupting the Sales Manager with scornful comments and raised a silly objection to every point he made. But the Sales Manager was uniformly patient and courteous. To Hari's astonishment, he even remarked at the end of the interview, "I wish I had fifty more customers like you, sir!"

Away from the customer's presence, Hari asked his boss the question that was troubling him. "Sir, how could you tell that obnoxious man that you wished for fifty more customers like him? Wasn't that a blatant lie?"

But the Sales Manager smiled and answered, "Not at all – on the contrary, it was nothing but the plain truth!"

"But – but how could that be?" Now Hari was really confused!

The Sales Manager explained, "You see, I have a hundred customers exactly like that lot. I sincerely wish I had only fifty!"



YOU SAID IT



The courtiers assembled at the Royal Court early, long before Emperor Akbar arrived, and waited. Soon they heard the sound of footsteps and the announcement, “*Shahenshah padar rahe hai.*”

Instantly they stood up. When the Emperor walked in, the guard raised the sword, up in the air, and hailed the Emperor, “*Allah ho Akbar*”. The courtiers echoed the call. The Emperor acknowledged their greetings, with a nod or a smile, while briskly walking across the aisle and moving up the steps leading to the throne. He sat down on the throne and signalled to those at the court to take their seats.

A guard walked in, carrying a cage that held a beautiful green parrot. He bowed, placed the cage carefully on the carpeted floor, and moved away.



“This parrot is a gift from a friend. Very dear to me! As dear to me as a brother,” the Emperor paused.

“It is the finest parrot I ever set eyes on,” Faiz Khan, one of the young courtiers, remarked.

“Have you made a study of parrots?” Emperor Akbar sounded amused.

“Not much. In all my life, maybe I’ve seen a dozen parrots, at the most. Not one of them impressed me. I have seen many shades of green. But the green of this parrot is the best. Look at its beaks. Powerful enough to crack the hardest nut! Its eyes are big and round and attractive. It cocks its neck with grace. This is the finest parrot alive today, Shahenshah,” the courtier saw a chance to please the Emperor.

“I was wondering who could take proper care of this parrot. You are the man for the job,” the Emperor stiffened and added, “Remember one thing. No harm should come to the parrot. Whoever brings me news of its death will be hanged.”

Faiz Khan had not expected that the Emperor would ask him to look after the parrot. He shuddered when he thought of the risk he faced if the parrot died while in his care. He wished he had not spoken so highly about the parrot. The other courtiers had been wiser. They held their tongues. He had put himself in a tight corner.

He stood up, bowed and said, “I consider it a great honour, Shahenshah, to be chosen for this task. The parrot will be safe with me, so Allah help me!” he bowed again.

“Well said,” the Emperor commended him. “I’m glad that the parrot is in safe hands.”

The Court now turned to administrative matters. The discussions continued till noon. Finally, the Emperor declared the session closed. The courtiers stood up while the Emperor moved out. The courtiers, too, dispersed.

Faiz Khan picked up the cage on his way out. The parrot chirped, merrily. He told himself that he would

consult bird lovers. They would give him the right tips on how to keep the parrot in good health. That thought drove away his fears.

He walked briskly till he reached home.

“What is this?” his wife asked when she noticed the cage and the parrot it held.

“Can’t you see, Begum Sahiba? This is a cage. And inside the cage is a parrot!” the man teased her.

“Who will look after the parrot?” she planted her mailed fists on either side of her waist.

“You,” said he, while the parrot produced all sorts of strange noises.

“No way. I already have a parrot to take care of,” she raised her eyebrows.

“A parrot?”

“What else are you? I’m married to a man who chirps all the time. You talk in season and out of season. You don’t know how to hold your tongue, ever. That’s your problem. And every time you speak, you get into trouble . . .” she paused, when a thought flashed through her. “Did you talk out of turn and get this parrot as a gift from the Shahenshah?”

“You guessed right,” he smiled, wanly.

“Listen to me. Get rid of it, right away. Give it to someone who loves to keep a parrot as a pet,” she shifted her glance to the parrot on hearing it producing loud notes by clanking its sharp beaks and saying loudly, “Nuts. Nuts. Nuts.”

“Did you hear that? It calls us nuts!” she protested.

“Oh no, dear. It is hungry and is asking for nuts,” the courtier explained.

“You want me to feed this bird? Do you know the danger? The bird may peck at the nut I hold and snip off tips off my fingers, too,” she threw up her hands in disgust.

“Learn to feed the parrot, Begum Sahiba. Take good care of it. The Emperor has entrusted the parrot to me. If it dies, I die too,” he told her of the threat to anyone who brought him news of the death of the parrot. “If it dies while under our care, count me dead,” he added.

“Oh my, my!” she could not control her wails and tears.

He held her gently and consoled her. She agreed to



take good care of the parrot. She consulted bird lovers, learnt what to do to keep the parrot in good health and followed the instructions strictly.

The Emperor often enquired from Faiz Khan how the parrot was. “In the pink of health, Shahenshah,” he assured the Emperor.

But good times never last forever. They ended, one morning, for Faiz Khan. He got up, went round to check on the parrot and found it lying on the floor of the cage. He went closer and whistled. The parrot did not respond. The parrot was dead.

Faiz Khan howled like a dog in pain. His wife ran to his side. He silently held his index finger in the direction of the cage. She checked. The parrot was not chirping, nor asking for nuts as it always did when she appeared. She went closer and checked. “My God! It seems to be dead,” she cried.

“It is dead. How will the Shahenshah take the news? He had warned that *whoever brought him news of its*

death would be hanged,” Faiz Khan’s face turned pale. He sank on the floor, buried his head in his palms and sobbed like a child.

He had to be in Court in an hour. What would he say if the Emperor asked about the parrot? He would have to tell the truth. That would be the end of him.

“Who would save me from certain death?” Faiz Khan mourned.

“I know the man,” his wife rose to the occasion. “Ask Birbal. He will find a way out of the trouble.”

Faiz Khan got ready, quickly, picked up the cage with the dead parrot and hurried to Birbal’s house. He knocked at the door. Birbal opened the door.

“*Salaam alai kum,*” the courtier bowed.

“Ah, my friend! Come in. Be seated,” Birbal welcomed the guest. Then his eyes fell on the cage and the dead parrot and he asked, in shock, “Isn’t the parrot the one Shahenshah entrusted to you?”

“Yes. I took great care. Yet I found it dead this morning,” Faiz Khan looked downcast.

“*Hey Bhagwan!* You are in real trouble, I guess,” Birbal remembered the Emperor’s words: *Whoever brings me news of the parrot’s death will be hanged.*

“Yes. How can I go and tell him that the parrot is dead?” Faiz Khan was in tears.

“There must be a way out, my friend,” Birbal paced the room for some time, considering the available options. Suddenly he exclaimed, “That is it.” He pressed Faiz Khan’s arm with warmth and said, “I’ve a plan. It should work. So, cheer up. Let’s hurry to the Royal Court. We can’t afford to be late.”

Faiz Khan went along, meekly, carrying the cage with the dead parrot. They took their place at the court just before the Emperor arrived.

The Emperor came soon, sat on the throne and surveyed the Court.

Birbal rose from his seat and bowed.

“Yes,” the Emperor waited to hear what Birbal had to say.

He picked up the cage, placed it in front of the Emperor and said, “Shahenshah! This parrot is a *yogi*. Can a parrot lie so still, remain perfectly immobile? See,



I can’t see even the slightest movement. I am sure it has gone into a state of perfect *samadhi*?”

Emperor Akbar examined the parrot and screamed, in anger, “You fool! The parrot is dead. Where is Faiz Khan? I gave it to him. He assured me that he would take good care of it. He has failed me. He deserves death!”

Faiz Khan shivered in his seat.

“Shahenshah, I remember your words. This is the warning you issued when you handed the parrot over to Faiz Khan. You told him: *You are the man for the job. Remember one thing. No harm should come to the parrot. Whoever brings me news of its death will be hanged,*” recalled Birbal.

“The parrot is dead!” the Emperor growled.

“You said it, Shahenshah, not Faiz Khan. So, according to your own order, who should die?” Birbal bowed his head again.

The Emperor chortled with rage. Then he saw the humour in the situation and laughed. “It is not worth taking a learned courtier’s life for a parrot,” he said, with a merry chuckle. And blood returned to the worried courtier’s face.

- R.K.Murthi

THE SUBLIME PEAK IN TRANCE



"Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky, Mont Blanc appears – still, snowy and serene -..." sang the inspired English bard, Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1816. Before him rose the graceful White Mountain with all its grandeur and beauty. He was simply charmed by it while on a visit to the lovely little town of Chamonix in France.

Fifty-six years before the famous poet penned his beautiful lines on Mont Blanc, one day in 1760 a wealthy Swiss gentleman had set out from Geneva to the French hamlet of Chamonix. In fact, he walked all the way along the slopes of the great Alps. He was Professor Horace Benedict de Saussure, an avid botanist, physicist and geologist. The snow-capped peak cast a spell on him. Gazing wistfully at the majestic crest, he did not write any poetry, but suddenly wished to offer a handsome reward for the first person to succeed in ascending the summit by

PACCARD



BALMAT

an easily accessible route. In fact, he dreamed of a day when he would reach to the top himself by the discovered way and make scientific observations and carry out experiments. A feat none had achieved till then.

Mont Blanc, the highest point, is part of the mountain range by the same name, which spreads along the French, Swiss and Italian territories. But the summit rising to an altitude of 15,781 ft is wholly French and is the loftiest in the Alps and in Western Europe. The upper half of this mountain is under perpetual snow and there are myriad magnificent glaciers including the Mer-de-Glace, the Sea of Ice. Mont Blanc is also sometimes called "La Dame Blanche", meaning the White Lady.

In those early days, almost two-and-a-half centuries ago, to climb the summit of this great range looked formidable, full of dangers and hardships

and practically impossible. There were no oxygen masks and other mountaineering equipment. So not surprisingly, for the next two decades more, the professor's prize remained unclaimed. For, no safe way had been found, in fact no one had found a route to the summit at all.

"But it is our Mont Blanc!" said Michel-Gabriel Paccard, a local doctor at Chamonix with an air of pride and patriotism. How can any one else take away the honour of climbing it? So, he made up his mind to scale this mountain and reach its summit. He also wanted to prove by his instrument that the determined altitude was wrong and Mont Blanc was much higher. These were his prime motives and not so much to make a name for himself or claim the prize money.

So the humble doctor, himself a climber of proven prowess, earnestly began preparations. He kept the mountain under constant vigil through his telescope. He tried to find the relation between the changing conditions of the snow and the incidence of avalanches on the slopes. After continuously gazing at Mont Blanc for no less than three years, he finally determined a route to the summit.

Meanwhile with a reward at stake, expeditions of the local mountain guides went off in every direction. Known for their courage, dexterity and hunger for money, they all made a sincere effort to reach the summit.

One of them was Jacques Balmat, a modest chamois hunter and collector of crystals. In 1785 he had managed to get as far as the Grand Plateau all alone. But his audacious advance was stopped by a large crevasse.

Jacques Balmat was in fact a picturesque, impulsive and happy-go-lucky character with an unstoppable will. His wife was used to his habit of disappearing for several days, sleeping under the stars, only to reappear, his clothes ripped to shreds and unshaven. Once in the middle of the night

Balmat clutching his wife began to yell frightfully. In fact, in his dreams he was climbing and suddenly lost his foothold and was slipping over an icy precipice. He made a frantic grab at a bough. Then he woke up to hear his dear wife angrily shouting at him: "Stop hanging on to my ear!"

Well, Dr. Paccard engaged this interesting man of courage and fine physique as his porter for his daring expedition to the elusive summit. So this strangely contrasting pair now began the perilous adventure. It was the dawn of August 7, 1786.

Mont Blanc was covered in clouds and a chill wind blew from the north. The weather looked ominous and threatened to worsen. But the doctor decided to keep to his plans unmindful of the climate. They set off on their long ascent with their glacier poles, barometer and knapsacks with provisions and necessary equipment. They camped the night on Mont Corbeau at an altitude of more than 7,500 feet.

The next day gave promise of fairer weather conditions. After some hours of easy climb they entered the most difficult and precarious part of their journey. They saw before them great glaciers, bright green and shimmering in the Alpine sunshine. There were immense seas of ice with yawning crevasses that dropped to unfathomable depths. The two brave men now cautiously negotiated their way across the treacherous ice-bridges. For, any moment the ice could ominously crack and send them down the dark deep abyss. On several occasions the ice did crack and they had to fling themselves forward flat on their faces with their glacier poles horizontal to the snow and from that position crawl out on the far side.

So the daring climbers braved these spine-chilling hazards and gradually pressed on towards their goal. They were soon standing on the Grand Plateau never before reached by any man. By and by as they gained greater heights, their endurance was sorely taxed

and the air became harder and harder to breathe. They suffered from biting winds, sleet and snow and intense cold. Yet as they gazed up at the beckoning peak, it gave them renewed strength and hope. Yes, they could still make it to the top.

Before sunset on August 8, 1786 amazed watchers in the Chamonix valley below saw the two men reach the summit. The doctor planted a stick with a red scarf blowing in the wind. It could also be seen all the way from the little town far below. Then Paccard took his barometer to measure the altitude of Mont Blanc. But unfortunately the instrument seemed to have been damaged during the rugged journey.

The two weary, but happy travellers spent some time on the crest of Mont Blanc surveying the magnificent beauty all around. As they could find no shelter on the summit they decided to start their descent. They managed to traverse the dangerous icy wilderness before darkness set in. Yet they continued in the light of the moon till they found a suitable place to camp for the night. They were both greatly weakened and their hands had gone completely numb. So taking some food and drink, they wrapped themselves in blankets and closely huddled together for warmth. Soon they fell asleep.

"It's strange, Balmat, I hear the birds singing but don't see the daylight. I'm afraid I can't open my eyes," said the doctor.

Jacques sat up and examined his companion's frost encrusted eyelids. They were too fast stuck to be forced open and were extremely painful. So it was decided to leave them alone for the time being. They set off down the slope again. The handicapped Dr. Paccard hanging on to his friend's knapsack, followed closely upon his heels. Thus slowly and patiently they managed to complete the final leg of their descent.

Luckily the snow blindness that Paccard suffered had no lasting effect on his eyesight. It seems he

lived to a ripe old age and still was able to read without glasses.

A route was at last found to the snow-capped, shimmering summit of Mont Blanc. Professor Horace Benedict Saussure, who started it all, finally climbed the mountain the following year, in 1787. Naturally, he did not forget the two heroic pioneers, Dr. Michel-Gabriel Paccard and Jacques Balmat, and rightfully gave them their due place and honour.

While pondering on this enchanting mountain Shelley sings,

"...when I gaze on thee

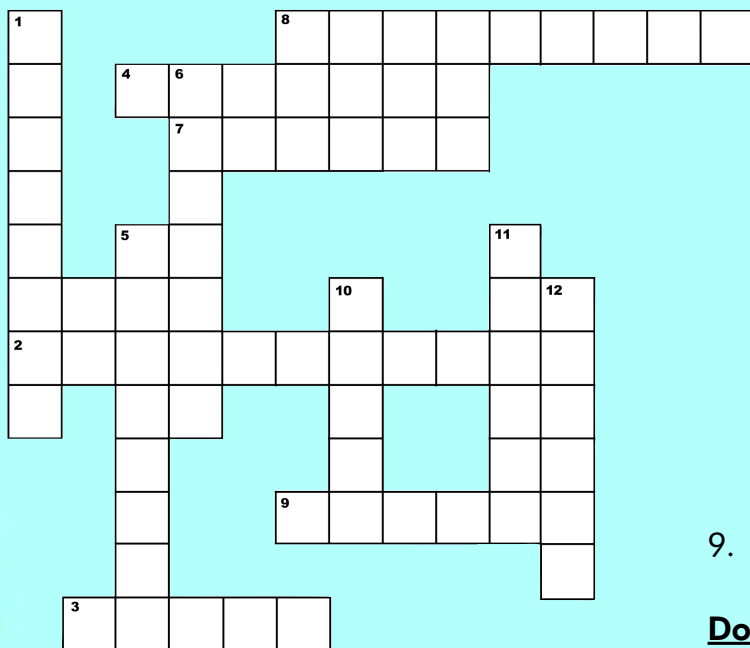
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange..."

(AKD)



PUZZLE DAZZLE

CROSSWORD ON MARINE ANIMALS



Here is a crossword
on Marine animals. Use the
clues to solve it.



Across:

2. They are small spiny sea creatures of the class *Echinoidea*, and they feed mainly on algae (9).
3. They are fish with a full cartilaginous skeleton and a streamlined body. They respire with their five to seven gill slits. They are some of the world's most misunderstood predators, as they very rarely attack humans unless provoked (5).
4. This animal sleeps with one half of the brain at a time and with one eye closed (7).
7. It occupies less than one quarter of one per cent of the marine environment; which are home to more than 25 per cent of all known marine fish species (6).
8. This animal does not have any brain, heart, bones or eyes. Some of them have ways of detecting obstacles that can be compared to sight but they do not have real eyes (9).

9. This animal's whiskers are called vibrissae (4).

Down:

1. They are masters of camouflage, changing colour and growing skin filaments to blend in with their surroundings (8).
5. This animal is also known as Sea Star (9).
6. This animal is very intelligent. It has no bones. It has three hearts all located in the head. It has eight legs (7).
10. This animal feed their young milk from their mammary glands, and have some (although very little) hair (6).
11. The shell of this animal is made up of 60 different bones all connected together (6).
12. They are large semi-aquatic mammals that live in the cold Arctic seas of the Northern Hemisphere (6).

- by R Vaasugi

Across: 2. Sea Urchin; 3. Shark; 4. Dolphin; 7. Corals; 8. Jelly fish; 9. Seal.
Down: 1. Sea Horse; 5. Starfish; 6. Octopus; 10. Whale; 11. Turtle; 12. Walrus.

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD:

RABBITS AT HOME

Every grown-up person has some fond memorable experiences of their childhood which they can share with those growing up. Being a grown-up, one of them I shall share with you. My siblings and I once had a pair of rabbits in our home when we were little.

We had fondly- and aptly- named them Motu (whom we also called Minku) and Patlu (whom we also called Chinku), for one of them was rotund and roly-poly—and the other, rather slightly built. But for this lone difference, they resembled each other so closely that it was well-nigh impossible for anyone, except us, to tell them apart. But then that is how most rabbits usually look.

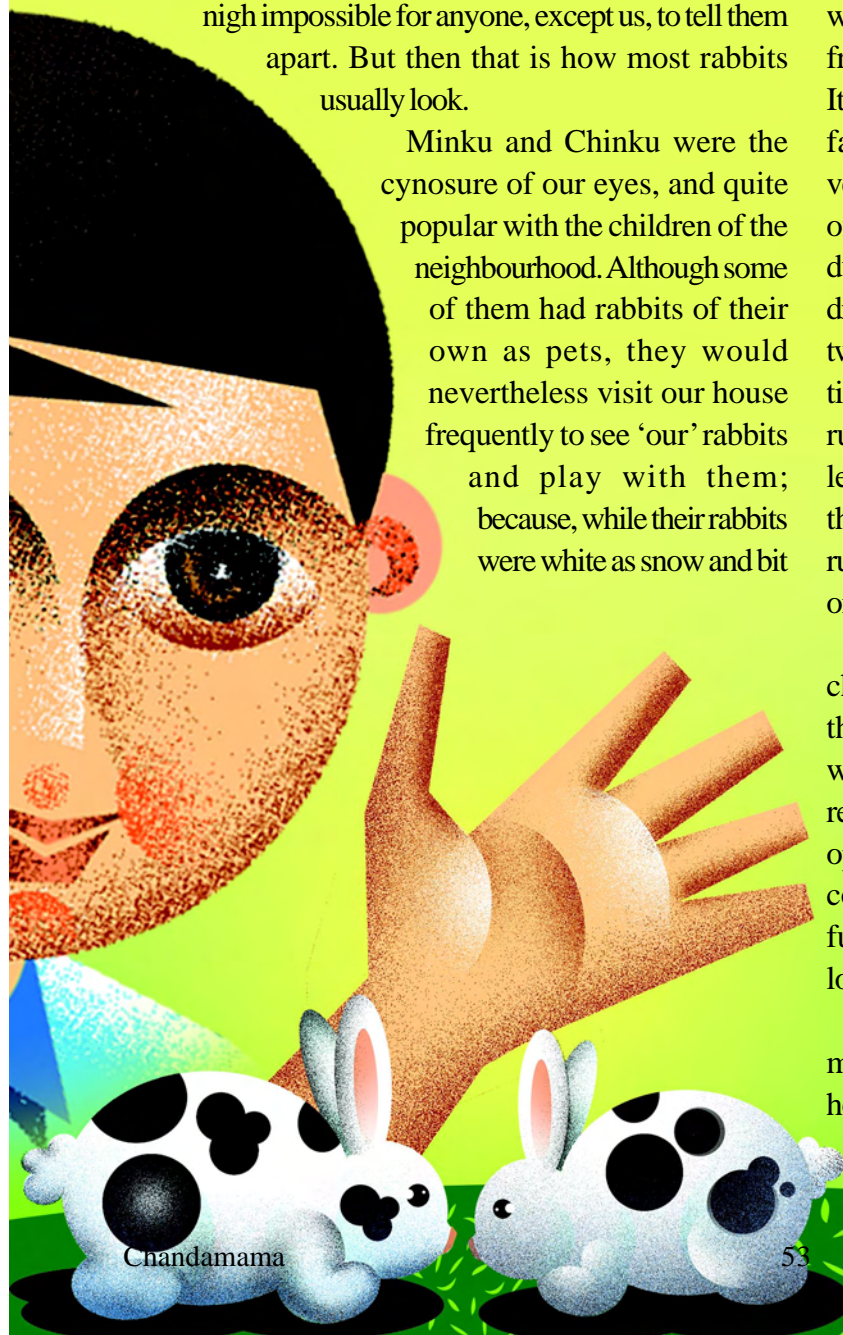
Minku and Chinku were the cynosure of our eyes, and quite popular with the children of the neighbourhood. Although some of them had rabbits of their own as pets, they would nevertheless visit our house frequently to see 'our' rabbits and play with them; because, while their rabbits were white as snow and bit

of a sloth, ours were white with black patches on them and very active compared to theirs. They were a different breed altogether and not very common. Ours was, perhaps, the only family in the entire colony that boasted such rabbits. We had not bought them from anywhere; we had received them as gifts from an acquaintance of ours.

The rabbit belongs to the Leporidae family. It usually leads a fossorial life. It digs a burrow, called the warren, in soft ground with the aid of strongly clawed forelimbs, which serves as a shelter for retiring or, in time of danger, from predators and to rear its helpless newborn young. It is a gregarious animal. It lives and moves in groups or families. It is herbivorous in diet, feeding on green vegetation. It is crepuscular in habit, that is, it comes out of warrens for feeding in twilight, mainly at dawn and dusk. It resorts to coprophagy, that is, it eats its soft night droppings without mastication. The same food thus passes twice through gut to provide maximum nourishment. It is timid and defenseless but very clever, agile and a swift-runner. On seeing or sensing danger, it thumps its hind legs on the ground to produce a warning sound so that the others may also run to safety. It moves by walking, running and leaping covering a distance of about 40km in one hour.

Minku and Chinku, naturally, had all the above characteristics. Despite the fact that we had provided them with a cosy home made of wood and cushioned with dry grass and scraps of old clothes, they were both ready to dig burrows at all times. Whenever they had an opportunity, they slid out of the house into the spacious courtyard and got themselves busy digging burrows furiously, and we siblings, concerned for their safety, looked for them all around the house.

Once it so happened that when we woke up in the morning, we found Minku had gone missing from his home. None of us had any idea since when in the night he



had been missing. With great concern for his safety, we all started looking for him at once. First, we searched for him all over the house—thoroughly, very thoroughly, looking into every nook and cranny where he could possibly hid himself away. But we did not find him inside the house. Then we went out into the courtyard and started looking for him there. But we did not find him there as well. Then, assuming him to have been lifted by a cat or one of the stray dogs that lived in the colony streets—and there were many of them living there—, we abandoned our search.

It was well-nigh noon time now. We had by now lost all hopes of seeing Minku ever again. Greatly sad at having lost him we were all lost in his memory, sitting at different places in the house. All of a sudden we heard barking and growling of dogs outside.

The sound was coming from the garden of the house right across the road that passed by our garden. When we heard the sound again, we all rushed out to find out why the dogs were barking and growling. On coming out we saw some dogs sniffing the ground at one spot in the neighbour's garden and barking and growling in between, furiously. It did not take us more than a moment to understand the whole business the dogs were going

about there, and we rushed with sticks and stones and set about trying to drive them away. But the dogs seemed bent on getting what they had gathered there for. What they had gathered there to get was our Minku. And the spot they were sniffing at was actually the mouth of a burrow Minku was hiding in at that moment, which he must have dug himself and it was what he must have been doing ever since he escaped from our home. The dogs were struggling with one another to get at him. How long Minku had been hiding in that



Chandamama India Quiz -2 (February 2007) Answers:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Kujala Kadphises | 8. The Greek ruler Menander |
| 2. Shravanabelagola (in present day Karnataka) | 9. Chandellas |
| 3. Krishna I of Rashtrakuta dynasty; in A.D.9th century | 10. Kanauj |
| 4. In Hampi, Karnataka | 11. Lord Cornwallis |
| 5. 3rd Battle of Panipat, 1761 | 12. In Sikandra (near Agra) |
| 6. Sher Shah Suri | 13. April 26, 1975 – Kazi Lhendup Dorji |
| 7. Raziya Sultana | 14. Ilara—in 2nd century B.C. |
| | 15. Governor General William Bentick – Persian |

NOTE : THERE WAS NO ALL-CORRECT ENTRY

burrow, we did not know (how could we know it, anyhow?).

While we were trying to drive the dogs away, some children from the neighbouring houses came to our assistance. It was only with their practical assistance that we could finally manage to drive those savage dogs away and save Minku from falling a prey to them and to bring him back home.

Minku and Chinku were both great hoarders of food. Apart from the green grass we served them daily in ample quantity, they accepted nearly all vegetarian food we offered them. Some of them they ate with relish on the spot but some, especially bread and *rotis*, they often carried into their wooden house or elsewhere in the house and stowed them away there for eating later.

We tended Chinku and Minku with all the care in the world and never left them alone or in the care of someone who was not a member of our family. Once it so happened that our family had to go to the village. While leaving home we carefully considered in whose care we would leave the two. After considering many names, we finally decided to leave them with the children of Chhedilal, our laundryman, who lived nearby and who frequently came

to our house to collect our dirty clothes for laundering or return the laundered one to us.

Although we had full faith in them that they would take proper care of Chinku nad Minku and would hand them back to us safe and sound on our return from the village, we had this worst fear that we might not see our rabbits alive again.

Anyway the day came when we returned from the village and went straight to Cheddilal's house, our heart in our mouth, to inquire about Chinku and Minku and take them back home if they were safe and sound. Our heart began to pound as we entered Cheddilal's house. But what we saw afterwards took us all by surprise: Chinku and Minku were not only safe and sound but had grown so fat over just a few days of stay there that even we found it difficult to recognize them and tell them apart. We had not even hoped, let alone expected, that Chhedilal's children would take care of Chinku and Minku in such a manner as to spring a surprise.

Until that day I had always thought that I and only I could take care of what belonged to me and no one else; but this incident made me change my thought. That day I learnt this valuable lesson 'that others too can take care of what belonged to me; and, at times, in a better way than I can myself, provided I can put my trust in them'.

- Sanjay Kumar Srivastava





FROM BIHAR

THE SOLDIERS OF THE COT

Sitaram was the son of Piyaaram Achari, a skilled carpenter. He was very intelligent even when he was a boy. He would watch his father at work for hours together with great interest. Piyaaram wanted his son to attend school and become a scholar, but the boy did not wish to leave the house for any reason and preferred to remain at home looking at the beautiful things that his father made—chairs and cots, doors and windows. He never saw his father go out to sell them; but people often came to his house to pick up an item, pay for it and go away.

The price the people paid was enough for the three-member family to pull on. So, the doting father and mother

did not bother much about the boy, who was now fast growing up as a young man. Whenever Piyaaram was away, even for a short while, Sitaram would pick up the implements and try his hand at chiselling and polishing waste wood pieces lying around. His father was not aware that his son was slowly becoming a talented carpenter himself.

The small family was struck by tragedy when Piyaaram suddenly passed away. For a couple of days, no sound of the carpenter's implements was heard from the house; mother and son practically went without food, except for whatever their neighbours shared with them. On the third day, Sitaram's mother woke him up and posed the question: "So, how are we going to make a living?"

Sitaram sat up in his bed and said, "Mother, I shall become a carpenter like my father."

His mother put up a brave smile. "But, son, you haven't learnt carpentry!"

Her son replied, "But, mother, I had watched father make so many things, and I feel I can start by making a few things. Let me make a try."

From that day, Sitaram's mother saw him busy making doors and windows and some odd things. The sound of the chisel and the hammer attracted the passersby, who now thought they could approach Sitaram for their requirements. They placed their orders and Sitaram made them to their satisfaction. Mother and son eked out a living without much difficulty.

It was not as if Sitaram had work for the entire day. On some days, he found that he had spare time with no orders on hand. He then thought of making a cot. He had some wonderful ideas in mind. It was not any plain cot; what he had in mind was a four-poster, again, not with any poles and rods to hang curtains. In the four corners,



the cot would have figures looking like soldiers. So, the cot would be a good acquisition for someone like a king. He told his friends and acquaintances: "Lucky will be the man who sleeps on this!"

Word soon spread and it reached the ears of King Pareshnath. One of his courtiers told him, "Your majesty! The cot has four soldiers in the four corners to take care of the one who sleeps on it!"

Now Pareshnath was a king beset with worries. He once dreamt that a demon was out to kill him. Since then he had not slept well. Another day, he heard from the royal astrologer that a hideous snake had taken residence in the palace; it might scare the king. His spies brought the news that the neighbouring kingdom was planning an attack. And his bodyguards one night detected a gang of thieves loitering near the royal treasury.

Naturally, the king had lost all his peace. He confided in his minister: 'Would the cot with the four wooden soldiers offer him some relief?' He asked the minister to meet Sitaram secretly and find out the price.

Sitaram was surprised when the minister called on him. He told the minister that he would not sell the cot to the king but make a gift of it. The king could reward him after using the cot. Of course, the minister did not disclose why the king was keen to possess the cot.

The minister arranged for the cot to be taken to the palace that night. Pareshnath was mightily pleased when he set his eyes on the cot and saw the beautifully sculpted figures of the four soldiers. The minister remained in the king's bedchamber till he was properly tucked into his bed. The king was fast asleep in no time.

One night, one of the soldiers came alive when he saw a demon creeping into the bedchamber. He had a drawn sword in his hand. The soldier caught hold of the demon, dragged him outside and killed him. After taking his place, he began narrating his adventure to the other soldiers. The king woke up, but feigned to be asleep so that he could listen to the conversation. When morning came, the king was told about the demon's body lying



outside the palace gates. Nobody knew how, when or who had killed the demon, except the king himself. He sent for the minister and told him what happened the previous night. He gave him a bag of gold coins and asked him to give it to Sitaram.

A few days later, the king was sound asleep, but one of the other soldiers came alive and heard a hissing sound. He was horrified to see a hideous looking serpent crawling towards the king's bed. The soldier caught it by its tail, came out of the bedchamber, took it beyond the palace gates and killed it. He was soon back in his position and began describing his valorous act to the other soldiers. The king woke up but pretended to be asleep and listened to the soldier's narration.

When morning came, the minister sought an audience with the king and informed him what the guards had told him, that a dead snake had been found near the palace gates. Later that day, the royal astrologer was summoned. He made certain calculations and said the king need no longer be afraid of being killed by the snake. The snake which was hiding in the palace had left the precincts. Only then did the king tell him how the snake had been found near the palace gates, dead. The king sent another bag of gold coins to Sitaram.

Soon afterwards, a third soldier of the cot came alive and left the royal chamber. He had heard strange noises coming from near the royal treasury. He rushed there only to find two thieves trying to break the locks of the treasury. The soldier managed to catch them and tie them with a strong rope.

When he came back to the king's bedchamber, he told the other soldiers how he had prevented a robbery at the royal treasury. The king overheard the conversation among the soldiers. He went out, called his bodyguards and asked them to go and check near the treasury. Soon they came back and told him of the two thieves lying bound with some tools. Luckily, the locks were intact. The king ordered the thieves to be imprisoned. When the minister met the king, he told him how the soldier of the cot had prevented the treasury being looted. The king sent another bag of gold coins to Sitaram.

The kingdom was rife with rumours that it would be attacked soon. King Pareshnath asked his courtiers to be alert and bring him news of soldiers of the neighbouring kingdom intruding in disguise. Though the rumours were bothering the king, by now he had such faith in the soldiers of the cot that he was sure they would come to the help of the kingdom. So, he did not allow his sleep to be disturbed by apprehensions about the safety of the kingdom.

He was unaware of what was happening one night. The fourth soldier came alive and proceeded to the apartments of the minister, where he found a man lurking in the courtyard in a suspicious manner. He was a spy from the neighbouring kingdom, who had been sent to kill the minister and create a turmoil which could then be taken advantage of for an attack. There was a scuffle between the soldier and the spy which woke up the minister, who came out and called his own bodyguards. They came and separated the two. The minister was surprised to see the soldier, who was not one from the local army, but he looked like one

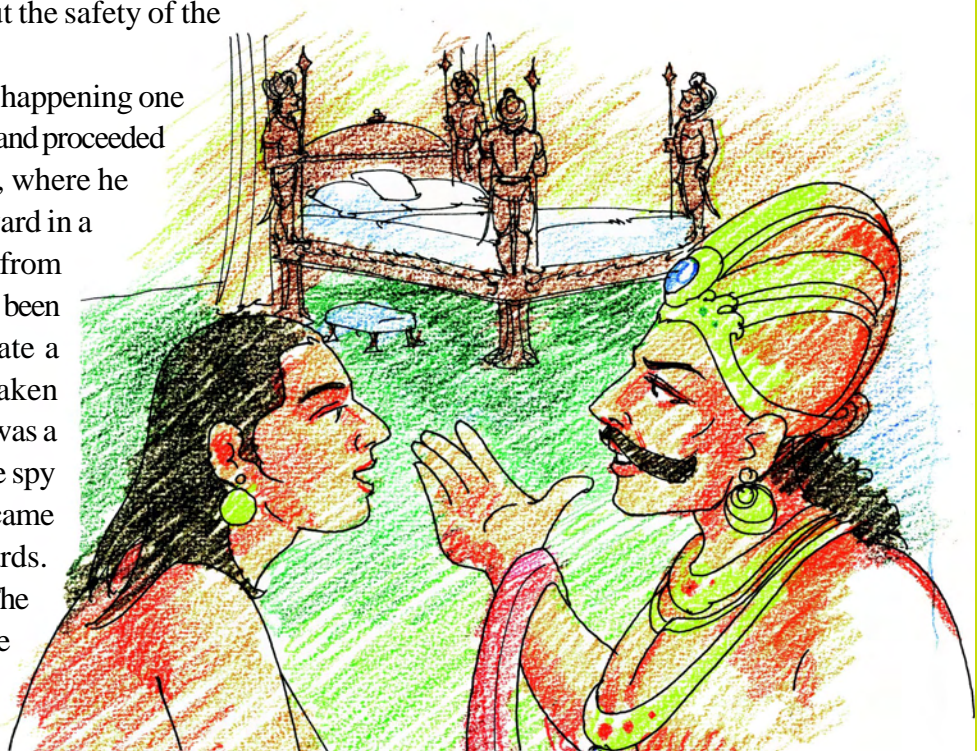
of the soldiers guarding the cot on which the king slept. "You...?" the minister exclaimed.

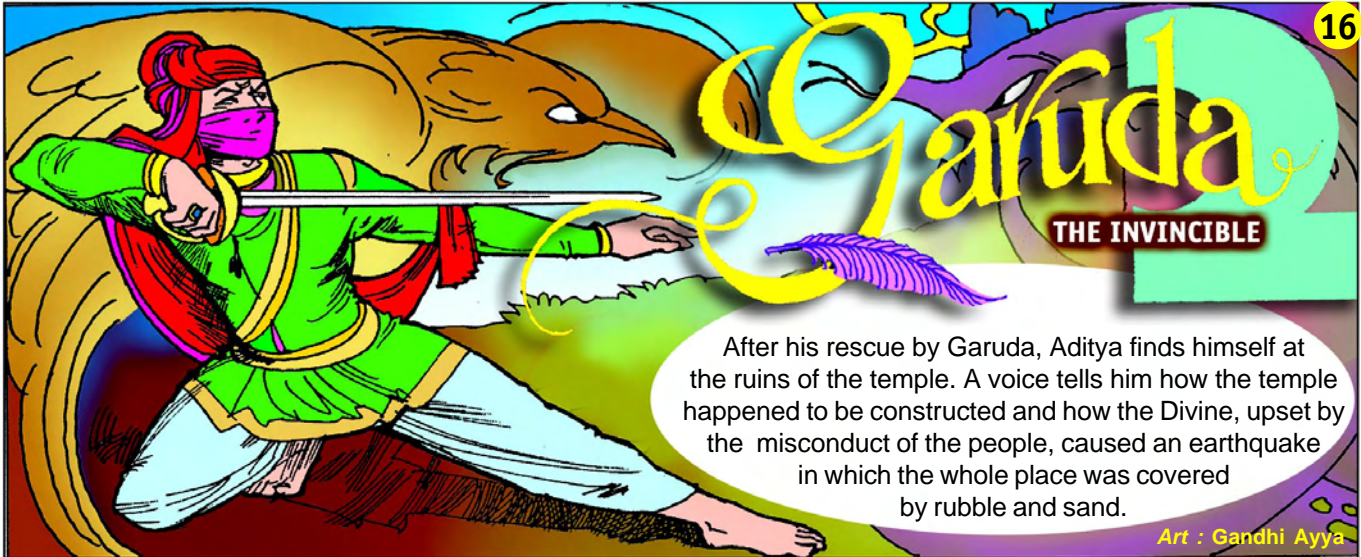
"Yes, sir, I'm one of the soldiers of the cot. The person I caught is a spy; he might have killed you. Let me now go back to my place in the cot. We are always at the service of the king!" The soldier turned round and disappeared.

The minister saw the intruder being taken away by the bodyguards and then rushed to meet the king. After he listened to the narration by the minister, the king said, "The soldiers of the cot have saved my life and your life, they have protected the treasury and saved the kingdom from an imminent attack. If they help us, we can even go to war with our neighbours. But before that, I would like to meet the carpenter."

The minister went and brought Sitaram. The king told his courtiers about the young carpenter and the cot he had made. "I make him our royal carpenter. Henceforth he will be known as Sitaram Achari. Though a carpenter, he will also attend my court." The king's proclamation was greeted with cheers.

When Sitaram went home escorted by bodyguards, his mother's joy knew no bounds. She teased him. "So, you're now an Achari?"





In Chandrapuri... Ramsingh calls on the king.



Your majesty, I've good news. Aditya is safe. One of my men has returned; it appears by the time they reached the ruins, they found Aditya already there. He has asked for more men, also sculptors and architects. I've already asked them to rush.

I'm glad Aditya is safe. Once the renovation work starts he can come back and he can later go for arranging the consecration ceremony and starting daily worship.



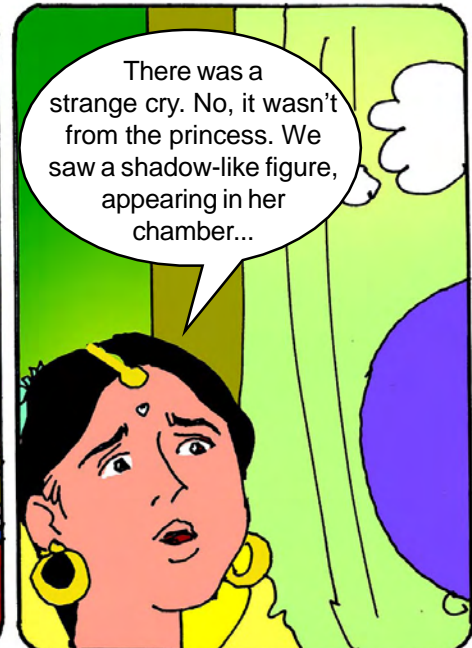
A bodyguard brings in Aruna's maid.



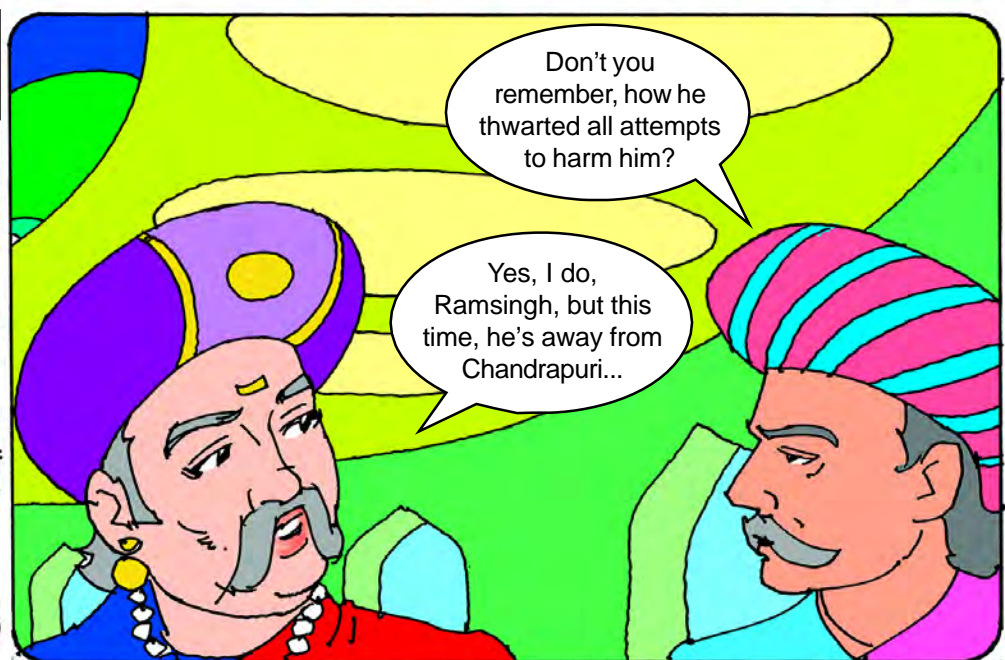
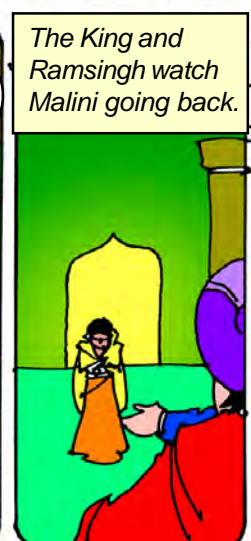
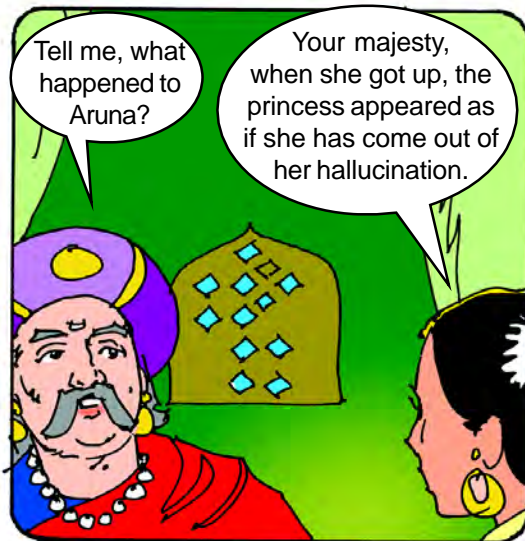
What's it, Malini? How's the princess?



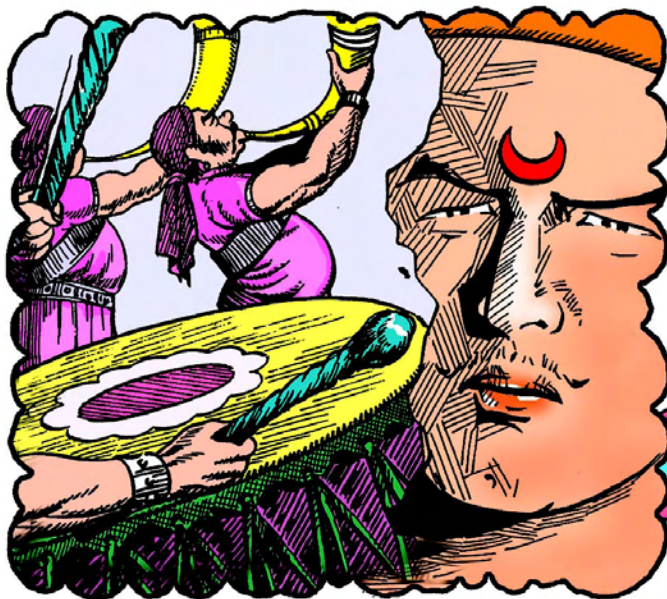
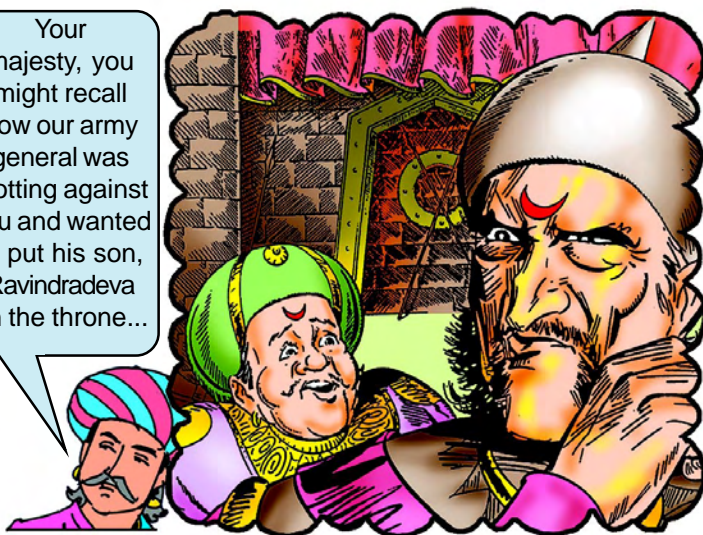
It's all a miracle, sir. We're unable to believe our eyes...



There was a strange cry. No, it wasn't from the princess. We saw a shadow-like figure, appearing in her chamber...



Your
majesty, you
might recall
how our army
general was
plotting against
you and wanted
to put his son,
Ravindradeva
on the throne...

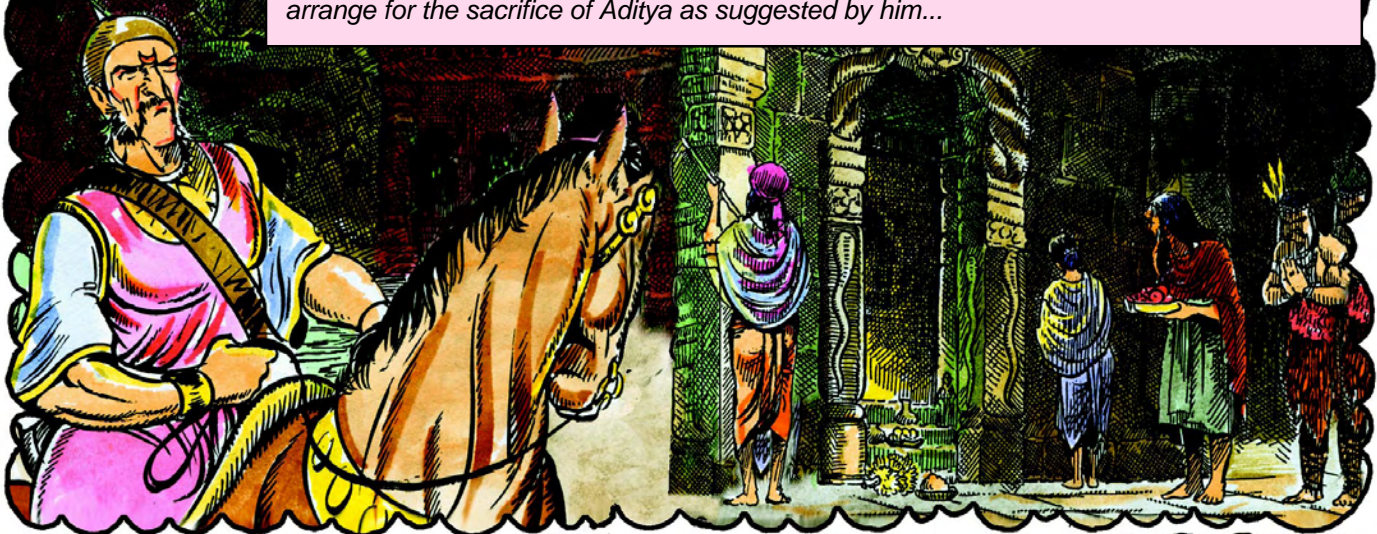


...It was
Aditya who
went about
the kingdom
in disguise
to expose
the evil
designs of
Narendradeva
and his son...

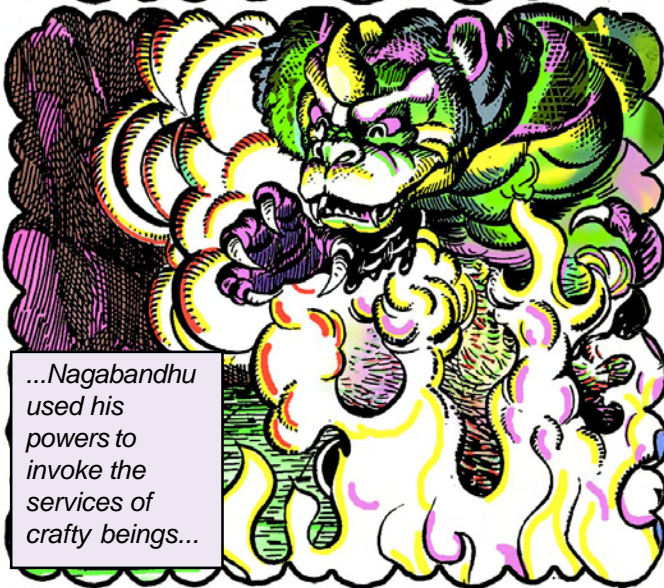


...When they failed in their efforts, they
even thought of sorcery...

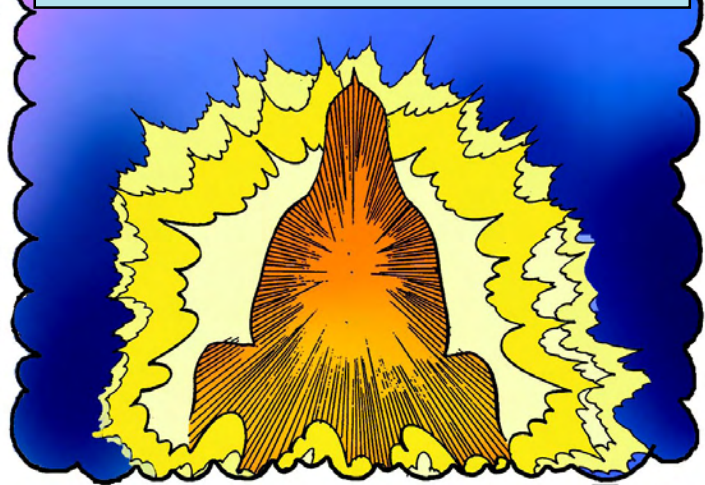
...Narendradeva went to the mountain temple and met the chief priest Nagabandhu to arrange for the sacrifice of Aditya as suggested by him...



...but nothing could affect Aditya who is not any ordinary human being. He is protected by some supernatural powers...



...Nagabandhu used his powers to invoke the services of crafty beings...

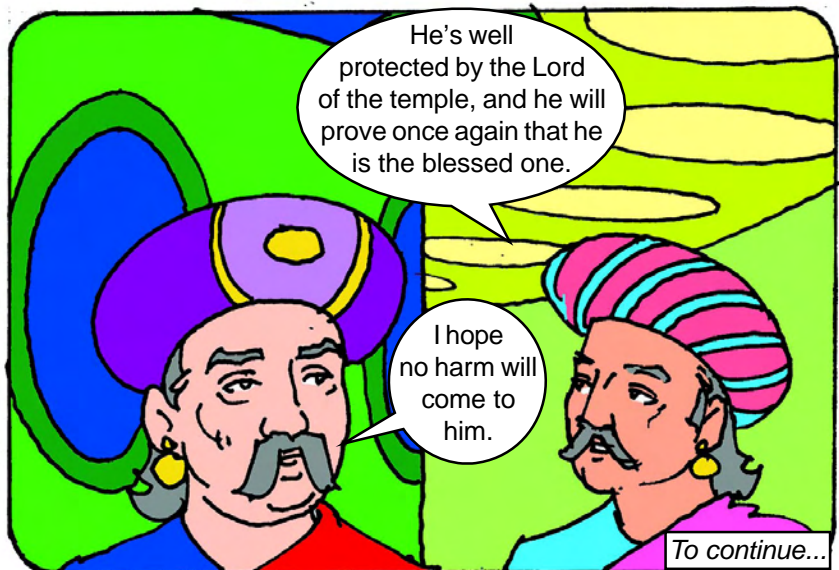


...It was the divine Garuda who made short work of the evil priest Nagabhandhu. Aditya is invincible.



He's well protected by the Lord of the temple, and he will prove once again that he is the blessed one.

I hope no harm will come to him.



To continue...

CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ-4

Co-sponsored by Infosys[®] FOUNDATION, Bangalore

Indians from ancient times to modern had won fame as great scientists. This month's quiz is about a few of them.

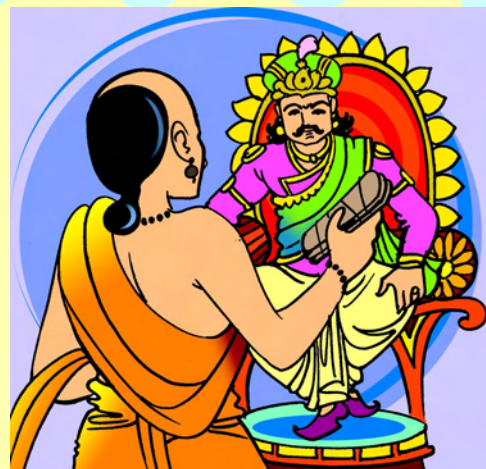
Try whether the clues will help you identify them.

What you should do: 1. Write down the answers; 2. Mention your name, age (you should be below 16), full postal address with PIN Code; 3. Mention your subscriber number, if you are a subscriber; 4. Write on the envelope **CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ-4** with your complete address; 5. Mail your entry to reach us by April 30, 2007; 6. The answers will be published in the June 2007 issue.

**AN
ALL-CORRECT
ENTRY WILL
FETCH A CASH
PRIZE OF
RS 250***

* If there are more than one all-correct entry, a lot will be taken to decide the prizewinner. However, the names of all those who have sent all-correct entries will be published.

1. The drawing is that of an astrologer in the court of King Vikramaditya. He predicted that the king would lose his son at the age of 18. The astrologer's prediction came true. How did the prince die? Who was the astrologer?
2. Who was the scientist who was the first to declare that objects both animate (plants) and inanimate (metals) have feelings?
3. A physician made his patients consume an intoxicated drink before he operated upon them. He came to be known as 'the father of anaesthesia'. Who is referred to here? When did he live?
4. A scientist interested in acoustics was returning by sea after giving a lecture in London. He was fascinated by the blue of the sky and the sea. He took up research in optics and received an award. Who was he? What was the award?
5. He was born in Kerala and studied in Nalanda University. He propounded the theory that earth is round and rotates on its own axis. This was in the 5th century. He headed the University. Who was he?
6. He was born in India, and did his research in Canada. Later he became a US citizen. When he won the Nobel Prize, people in India felt proud of him. Who is being referred to here?
7. An Oxford-born scientist later made India his home as he found that the country's flora and fauna had scope for years of study. Who was he?





THE BELL OF ATRI

There was once upon a time, in Italy, a good king named John, who declared that everyone should obtain justice. As it was impossible for him to listen to all complaints personally, he had a huge bell hung in a tower in the city and proclaimed that anyone who had a complaint had only to ring the bell and the judge would immediately present himself at the public place and render justice.

The people of Atri did not fail to pull the rope of the bell each time they had a complaint. As soon as the bell rang, the judge would go to the public place to listen to the complaint.

Because of the force used while being pulled, the rope wore out and became so short that someone attached a piece of vine to give it enough length. Came summer, the heat was too much, everyone was asleep when, suddenly, in the middle of the day the bell began to ring. The inhabitants, were awakened with a start. "Surely, some big injustice has been committed."

Soon the judge arrived at the public place, escorted by many of the residents. To their surprise, they saw a poor horse, looking emaciated, which was eating the leaves on the vine attached to the rope of the bell!

Angry at having been disturbed, the judge asked impatiently, "Whose horse is this?"

He was told that the horse belonged to a great lord in the neighbourhood, and that it had more than once saved his master's life by its speed. But as days went by, the steed had become old and his master ordered that the horse be sent out of the stable, so that it could graze along the roads and under the trees. The poor horse, old and lame, had thus wandered for several days without food and, finally, coming to the city it had stopped to eat the leaves of the vine.

The judge called for the owner of the horse and, after questioning him, found that everything that was told was true. He then declared that since the horse had faithfully served his master as long as he was strong and sturdy, the master was obliged to feed it and keep it comfortably as long as it lived.

The inhabitants welcomed the decree and claimed that their bell was superior to all others, seeing that even animals could obtain justice and complain against the cruelty of their masters. As for the horse, it was led in triumph to its stable where it got enough hay and oats as long as it lived.

- Shanti Dinakar

SPORTS

AN INDIAN WORLD CHAMPION

The name Viswanath means in Sanskrit lord (*nath*) of the universe (*viswa*). Viswanathan Anand now overlord the world of Chess! On March 10, he won the Morelia-Linares Super Grandmaster tournament and made it to the top place in that game. In world rankings, he has been placed at Number One.

Viswanathan Anand, many of you might remember, had won the World Junior Championship in 1987. He was only 17 then. He soon came to be known as the "Lightning Kid" because of the speed with which he would make his moves. Next year he became India's first and only Grandmaster. When he was 22, Anand won the Reggio Emilia title, in which he went past world champions Anatoly Karpov and Garry Kasparov. He continued his winning streak and reached the final at the World Trade Center in New York. He beat Alexei Shirov in Tehran to win the world title, in 2000. In 2003, he won the World Rapid Chess Championship. In 2006, he became one of only four players in the world to cross the 2,800 mark in chess ratings. And now comes the Linares Super Grandmaster title and the World Champion's crown.



EARLIER WORLD CHAMPIONS



BILLIARDS : India's Wilson Lionel Garton Jones was the first Indian world champion in any sport. He won the World Billiards Championship in 1958 and 1964.

BADMINTON : Prakash Padukone won the prestigious All England Badminton Championship in 1979.



NOT BRAUN ALONE, BRAIN TOO

'Cricket is a mind game, and half the battle at the highest level is won when one operates with a precise mind'. India's youngest cricketer S.Sreesanth has come to this conclusion after getting his body movements scientifically sharpened by Brain Gym, which enhances learning procedure through movements. Athletes the world over have started learning the benefits of the

movements which "facilitate good thought flow, which in turn improves my thinking, planning and concentraion—all essential for a cricketer." Sreesanth adds: "I practise all the seven movements every day, and the energy levels reach a higher plane when I am through with them." He received the brain-gym inputs prior to his tour of the West Indies from Dinesh Victor of SIP Academy India. Mr.Victor says, Brain Gym movements stimulate a flow of information, restoring the innate ability to learn and function with curiosity and joy. He attributes Sreesanth's celebration after nailing a batsman to a scientific movement that is put into practice. Incidentally, SIP Academy is headquartered in Chennai.



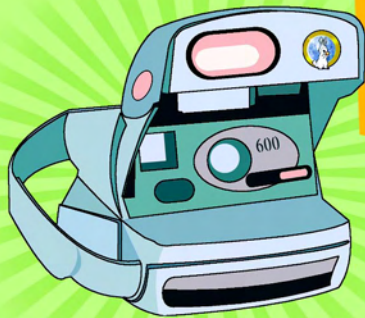


Photo Caption CONTEST

You may write it on a post card marking it:

Photo Caption Contest, CHANDAMAMA

and mail it to reach us before the 20th of the current month.



NARAYANAMURTHY TATA

Can you write a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other?



NARAYANAMURTHY TATA

Congratulations!

February 2007 Lucky Winner:

SAIKET TALUKDAR

2-c/ Vishal Apartments
2/2 Santosh Roy Road
Sakher Bazar, Kolkata 700 008



WINNING ENTRY

"BIG BOY, SMALL THOUGHTS"
"SMALL BOY, BIG THOUGHTS"

The best entry will receive a Prize of Rs.100 and it will also be published in the issue after the next. Please write your address legibly and add PIN code.

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OIL WELL

SEVERAL MILES ACROSS

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WATER BEARING SAND

LIMESTONE SHALE

GAS BEARING SAND

OIL BEARING SAND

LIMESTONE SHALE

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April 2007

PARLE Ram and Shyam

The Colorless Rainbow

